

NOTES AT RANDOM

by HUGH ROSS
WILLIAMSON

A Book for the Moment—Bernard Shaw's "Trial of Jesus"—

T. S. Eliot, Traditionalist—A Great Historical Biography

February was indeed a month for bookmen. Two prefaces by Bernard Shaw, three critical essays by T. S. Eliot, a selection of letters from D. H. Lawrence, Norman Douglas's autobiography, additional extracts from the notebooks of Samuel Butler, a further instalment from the Creevey Papers, Professor Neale's long-awaited Life of Queen Elizabeth—one has been veritably embarrassed with riches. Nevertheless the first book on my list is none of these, but a political work entitled "Preparing for Power," written by J. T. Murphy, an ex-communist, and giving with admirable lucidity and lack of bias (by which I do not mean lack of a point of view) the history of the British working-class movement during the last hundred years.

There are several reasons why this book should have a prior claim even among the imposing list I have mentioned. By process of elimination alone it would stand first. Shaw says nothing, as far as I can discover, which either he has not said or implied before or he might not be expected to say. T. S. Eliot, in developing his ideas on tradition, has merely pointed the fact that, however revolutionary may be his manner as a creative artist, and however sensitive his individual critical judgments, the matter of his thought is becoming increasingly indistinguishable from a nostalgia for a dead (and on the whole well dead) past. The new Lawrence letters serve as a bitter reminder that we have recently had more than enough of his commercialised apotheosis. The author of "South Wind" reveals himself in his island fastness as an after-dinner interpreter of his own visitors' book—yet, in spite of wit and observance, we prefer him as the author of "South Wind." The militant materialism and ungracious rationalism of Butler is still occasionally alleviated by wit, but more often underlined by lapses of taste and, in any case, the new extracts illustrate chiefly what *vieux jeu* poor Samuel has become. The Creevey Papers and the Life of Elizabeth possess antiquarian interest only.

This is not to imply that these books are not entertaining or even, in their different ways, important. They are. All of them definitely are books to have read: "Preparing for Power" is a book to read. It is history—though history not in the sense of a tale that is told, but as a prelude to a drama in which we, whether we like it or not, are to be the actors. It is

biography—though not recording the eccentricities of individuals of "the crocodile tears of European genius," but the chronicle of the achievements and aspirations of the great majority of Englishmen. It is criticism—but that to be implied from actualities, not a supply of predigested generalities. Above all, it is a record of facts which should be known by everyone interested in to-day's affairs and the probabilities of to-morrow. At a time when we are surfeited with theories, a little

knowledge (which, unlike learning, is not dangerous even in small quantities) does not come amiss.

To read "Preparing for Power," with its balance so well kept in spite of its comparative shortness, is to grasp the clue to the curious political complexion of this country. England is still a mixture of modern industrialism and ancient feudalism to an extent which makes comparison with other nations misleading. It may be true that on the whole the interests of the factory-worker are the very opposite of those of the factory-owner (though this, in the case of many private family concerns, is very far from the truth); but it is certainly false that the interests of the great and the small agriculturists are antithetical. The machine, by

its workings, may have generated the idea—even the fact—of class opposition; the land no less surely enforces class co-operation.

The curious paradox of English history is that the Reform Bills of last century were, as far as the workers were concerned, charters of tyranny. The defeat of the squires resulted in the very opposite of the liberty of their tenants. The only gainers were the industrialists who, having used the masses to dispossess the squires, then proceeded to enslave the masses. This truism would not be worth repeating were it not for the too usual assumption that the process was complete and final. It was not—and the survival of the squires may be a decisive factor in future events. Fundamentally the conservatism of the landowners is as far removed from the conservatism of the industrialists as communism is from fascism. And when the Labour Party complains of the difficulties of winning the country districts for socialism, it is in reality admitting that the vast majority of countrymen instinctively realise, even if they could not consciously explain, the difference.

The bearing of this cleavage on the contemporary

IN OTHER MARCHES . . .

As an aid to digestion, while dining with my lady Sunderland, John Evelyn watched a man swallow a knife in a horn sheath and "divers great stones," which rattled together audibly within him.

Doctor Johnson and Garrick left Lichfield to find their fortunes in London, the former with "two-pence-halfpenny in his pocket" and Garrick "with three-halfpence in his."

Having been fined 8,000 lire and banished for two years, Dante was sentenced to be burnt if captured.

Charles Dickens paid over a cheque for £1,790 for the purchase of Gad's Hill Place.

Macaulay having sold 26,500 copies of his History in ten weeks, Messrs. Longman, his publishers, were so overwhelmed with money that they insisted on paying £20,000 into his banking account.

G. U.

situation is, it seems to me, that it may determine the future of fascism (in any form) in England. For fascism is not an instrument of capitalism as such; it is an instrument of the industrialists. And if ever the menace of it becomes potent, we may well find that the positions of 1832 will be reversed, and the great conservative landowners stand out as the leaders of the people in a fight for liberty.

This suggestion I know would be quite abhorrent to Mr. Murphy, who writes from the Marxist standpoint. Perhaps it is unfair to father it on his book, though it arose from reading it. Other readers doubtless will arrive at other conclusions—but whatever the upshot, “Preparing for Power” is a stimulating work.

G. B. S.—His Prefaces

Bernard Shaw, in his preface to “Too True to be Good,” glances from a different angle at this division of the conservatives. His play indeed has as its thesis the misery of “riches detached from real property,” which means in fact “being a tramp without the daily recurrent obligation to beg and steal your dinner and the price of your bed. Instead you have the daily question: ‘What shall I do? Where shall I go?’ and the daily answer: ‘Do what you please: go where you like: it doesn’t matter what you do or where you go.’ In short, the perfect liberty of which slaves dream because they have no experience of its horrors.”

But the main interest of the preface is that it is Shaw’s answer to G. K. Chesterton’s accusation that he advocated government by a committee of celebrities. The names alone evoke a certain splendour—a memory of the dear dead days when the two doughty adversaries first faced one another. Almost one feels that it is one of the tournaments of old romance. Shaw, by comparing the ideal of mediæval Catholicism with that of modern communism, makes a point which is valid only as the haziest generality. Humorously he assumes that the analogy will appeal to Chesterton. (Most probably it will—for if there is one writer whose knowledge of the real Middle Ages is probably slightly less than that of G. B. S., it is G. K. C.) His main contention that government by vocation is a necessity will be generally admitted and, as J. B. S. Haldane pointed out some time ago, the logical development of communism is the most exclusive, the most efficient and the most ruthless aristocracy the world has ever seen—the aristocracy of intellect. (This explains incidentally why so many Whigs become communists, even if only drawing-room ones.)

The second preface in the volume, that to “On the Rocks,” is notable mainly for an eight-page conversation between Jesus and Pilate in which the famous question: “What is truth?” receives its answer. This contains some magnificent passages and is the best thing in the book. The discussion on Christianity and “Crosstianity” we have had before—in the prefaces to “Androcles and the Lion” and “Major Barbara.” The compression of it into a brief dramatic form makes one believe, in spite of much evidence to the contrary, that Shaw as a dramatist is superior to Shaw as a preface-writer. A short extract will give the quality of it:

PILATE: And I am to spare and encourage every heretic, every rebel, every lawbreaker, every rascalion lest he should turn out to be wiser than all the generations who made the Roman law and built up the Roman Empire on it?

JESUS: By their fruits ye shall know them. Beware how you kill a thought that is new to you. For that thought may be the foundation of the Kingdom of God on earth.

PILATE: It may also be the ruin of all kingdoms, all law and all human society. It may be the thought of the beast of prey, striving to return.

JESUS: The beast of prey is not striving to return: the Kingdom of God is striving to come. The empire that looks back in terror shall give way to the kingdom that looks forward with hope. Terror drives men mad: hope and faith give them divine wisdom. The men whom you fill with fear will stick at no evil and perish in their sin: the men whom I fill with faith shall

inherit the earth. I say to you: Cast out fear. Speak no more vain things to me about the greatness of Rome. The greatness of Rome, as you call it, is nothing but fear: fear of the past and fear of the future, fear of the poor, fear of the rich, fear of the High Priests, fear of the Jews and Greeks who are learned, fear of the Gauls and Goths and Huns who are barbarous, fear of the Carthage you destroyed to save you from your fear of it, and now fear worse than ever, fear of imperial Cæsar, the idol you have yourself created, and fear of me, the penniless vagrant, buffeted and mocked, fear of everything except the rule of God: faith in nothing but blood and iron and gold. You, standing for Rome, are the universal coward: I, standing for the Kingdom of God, have braved everything, lost everything, and won an eternal crown.

T. S. Eliot’s “Primer of Modern Heresy”

After reading T. S. Eliot’s “After Strange Gods,” one is left with the uneasy feeling that he might possibly approve of Pilate’s argument. His description of the Inner Light as “the most untrustworthy and deceitful guide that ever offered itself to wandering humanity,”

THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS

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AFFAIRS

“Preparing for Power.” By J. T. Murphy. 6s. (Jonathan Cape.)

BIOGRAPHY

“Looking Backwards.” By Norman Douglas. 18s. (Chatto & Windus.)

CRITICISM

“After Strange Gods.” By T. S. Eliot. 3s. 6d. (Faber & Faber.)

DRAMA

“Too True to be Good,” “Village Wooing” and “On the Rocks.” By Bernard Shaw. 7s. 6d. (Constable.)

HISTORY

“Queen Elizabeth.” By J. E. Neale. 9s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)

MEMOIRS

“Creevey’s Life and Times.” Edited by John Gore. 18s. (Murray.)

MISCELLANEOUS

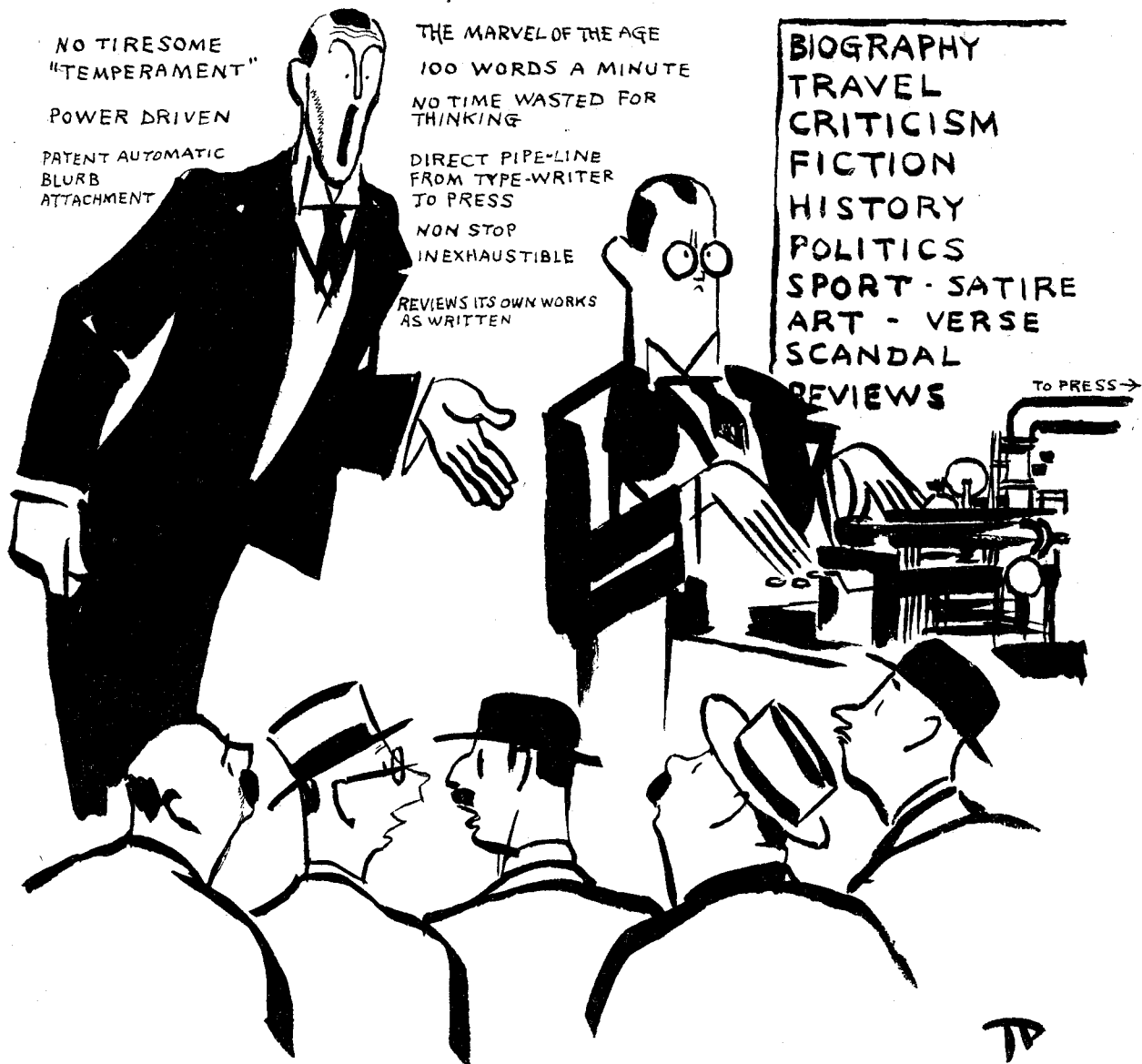
“Claude Monet and His Garden.” By Stephen Gwynn. 10s. 6d. (Country Life.)

WORTH WAITING FOR

By Thomas Derrick

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St. James's Street about the time of Creevey
From "Creevey's Life and Times" (Murray)

if not unexpected is at least more explicit than usual. Nor can one escape from the deeper issues raised by the book by treating it as an essay in literary criticism. To do so would be to insult it. Mr. Eliot is in reality concerned with the diabolic forces (in a theological, even an ecclesiastical sense) which can make use of individual genius to pervert the world. He develops the thesis originally stated in "Tradition and the Individual Talent," and shows irrefutably the dangers inherent in an age without tradition and orthodoxy. As it is impossible in a short comment to convey the carefulness of definition and lucidity of exposition with which he sustains his argument, I quote one sentence which seems to me to epitomise it: "What is disastrous is that the writer should deliberately give rein to his 'individuality,' that he should even cultivate his difference from others; and that his readers should cherish the author of genius, not in spite of his deviations from the inherited wisdom of the race, but because of them."

He finds, as one would expect, D. H. Lawrence a fitting instrument for the dæmonic forces (his pages on Lawrence are the best in the book, and as criticism will surely constitute the final word on that "very much greater genius, if not a greater artist than Hardy"). He suggests truly: "That we can and ought to reconcile ourselves to Liberalism, Progress and Modern Civilisation is a proposition which we need not have waited for Lawrence to condemn: and it matters a good deal in what name we condemn it." But in that sentence he has revealed the weakness of his own position. He has, by the simple act of grouping together "Liberalism, Progress and Modern Civilisation," given us a glimpse of his thought which is as valuable as many more studied pronouncements. I do not mean that, by implication, he advocates Conservatism, Retrogression and Mediæval Civilisation. That would be too sweeping and unfair—though I am not at all sure that he would disavow that trinity. But it does show that he still regards Modern Civilisation as in some way connected with Liberalism and Progress: as the result possibly of a Victorianly discovered evolutionary

process. It is on this fundamental mistake that his whole theory of tradition breaks down.

Nearly fifty years ago Richard Jefferies wrote of a cameo of Augustus Cæsar: "It is a balanced head, a head adjusted to the calmest intellect. That head when it was living contained a circle of ideas, the largest, the widest, the most profound current in his time. . . . It is reasonable to imagine a head of our time filled with the largest, the widest, the most profound ideas current in the age. Augustus Cæsar, however great his

intellect, could not in that balanced head have possessed the ideas familiar enough to the living head of this day. As we have a circle of ideas unknown to Augustus Cæsar, so I argue there are whole circles of ideas unknown to us."

In a short half-century we have reached, owing to scientific discoveries, that new circle of ideas, as far removed from the Victorians as the Victorians were removed from Augustus Cæsar. With eighteen centuries between, it was possible for a tradition, magnificent at its best, useful even at its worst, to dominate a gradual evolution; with fifty years there can be no continuity but

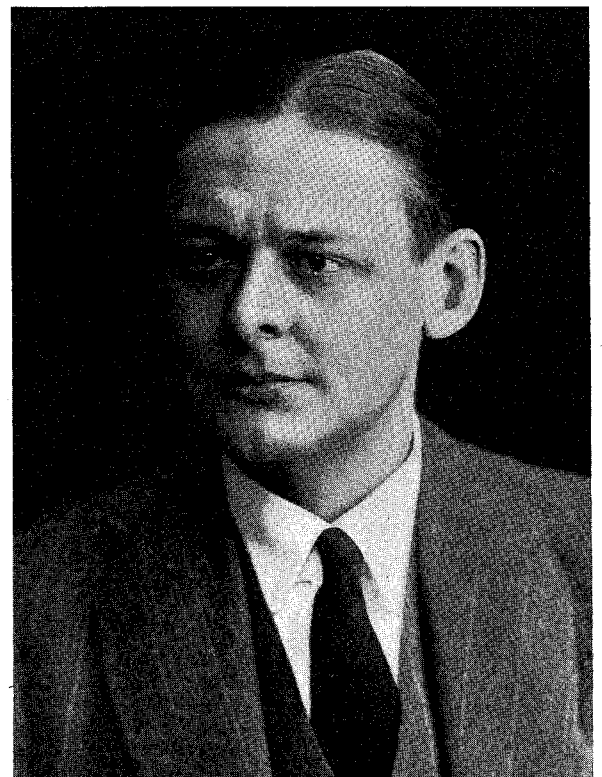


Photo by Vandyck

T. S. Eliot

that inevitable by reason of the habit and memory and prejudice of a single generation. Even to talk of tradition in these circumstances is folly. "Modern Civilisation" is not the product of Victorian liberalism; it is something wildly and cataclysmically new, demanding its own laws and sanctions, and finding as little help in nineteenth century thought as in the Rome of Augustus Cæsar. The chaos in which we are involved (and which only posterity perhaps will be able to analyse fully) is due largely to the application of old rules to unprecedented situations—moral, social and economic. What, above all, is necessary to salvation is an individual vision which shall assert new values—values which are valid not because they can be related to tradition, but because they meet the needs of the new situation. Thus both Eliot, in his retreat to mediævalism, and Lawrence, in his individual *saute qui peut* to Mexico, are completely out of touch. They cancel each other out, but the equation is now a matter of academic interest only.

Lawrence

Lawrence's wanderlust, his long, unavailing effort to escape from himself and the civilisation in which he found himself, is reflected in the hundred or so letters to Mr. and Mrs. Brewster, now first published in "D. H. Lawrence: Reminiscences and Correspondence" (10s. 6d.; Martin Secker). The letters cover the last nine years of his life, beginning in Germany and continuing from the various countries of his wanderings until his death at Vence. Mr. Brewster supplies comment and reminiscence, which is better than the sort of rubbish to which we have become recently inured.

Yet there is nothing in this book as valuable as Eliot's criticism of Lawrence, to which I have referred, or Norman Douglas's eleven masterly pages of reminiscence in his autobiography, "Looking Back." In this survey is included also a letter from the "Sir William" of "Aaron's Rod," in which he presents *his* side of the story. This book, as Norman Douglas points out, teems with examples of Lawrence's "love of scoring off people to whom he is under an obligation."

Creevey

The new selection from the Creevey Papers, edited by John Gore ("Creevey's Life and Times") needs no recommendation. Its importance to historians and its interest to lovers of gossip are immediately apparent. Although the main interest is centred on Creevey himself (who must have been a bore), there is a host of good stories of the days of the Regency. Mr. Gore is to be congratulated.

A Great Biography

Professor J. E. Neale is the foremost authority in England on the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and for that reason readers will take his *Life* of her on trust. The public for which the book is written is "the body of lay men and women interested in a great historical personality. I have therefore," writes the author, "removed the elaborate scaffolding of documentary authority used in the construction of the book." But though the story is as enthralling as any novel, one is always aware of the profound scholarship behind it. Sources become unnecessary because this itself is a source-book. I may add that the interpretation will not commend itself to the devotees either of Mr. Lytton Strachey's romantic melodrama or of Mr. Hilaire Belloc's curious propaganda.

In Monet's Garden

Mr. Stephen Gwynn has given us a pious memorial to Monet and the garden which he has immortalised in paint—a fascinating book both for garden-lovers and for admirers of the artist. Reading this prose tribute, I was reminded of the occasion when the garden, with the Japanese bridge, was put on the stage. It was the last scene in a Sacha Guitry revue, and in the wings of a stage which seemed but a large edition of one of the famous paintings, Yvonne Printemps sang the song of the nightingale. Then over the bridge came Clemenceau with the news that the War was over. He and Monet sat in silence for a moment; then the statesman asked the artist what was the next task. "Isn't it time," asked Monet, "that you did something about that memorial to Cézanne?"

There the curtain came down. Clemenceau's reply was censored by the authorities. It was: "Yes, of course. Cézanne—yes. That was the village we captured from the Germans in 1915."



In Monet's Garden

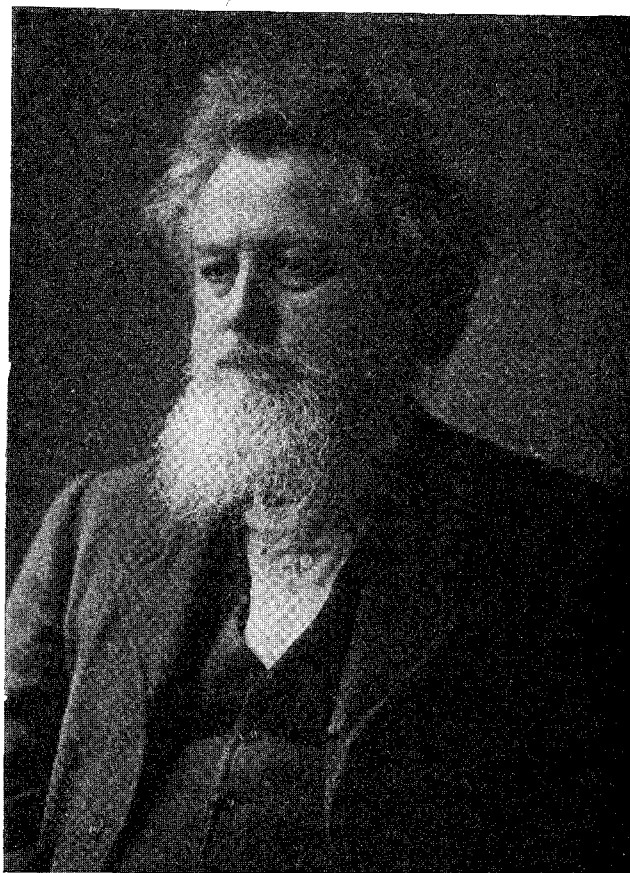
From "Claude Monet and his Garden." (By kind permission of "Country Life")

WILLIAM MORRIS—MAN CREATIVE

AN ESTIMATE OF HIS SIGNIFICANCE TO-DAY

by Geoffrey West

WHAT is the significance of William Morris for us to-day? He was born just one hundred years ago this month, and died in the last decade of the nineteenth century. An eventful thirty-seven years



William Morris
Photo by Elliott & Fry

it has been which divides us from his death, and little of his work, his own poetry or prose, seems read to-day. In regard to much of it one frankly cannot express surprise. The poems such as "The Defence of Guinevere," "The Life and Death of Jason," even "The Earthly Paradise," even "Sigurd the Volsung," which is magnificent story telling worthy of its great theme, and certainly most of the later prose romances—these come to us almost like stories conceived and set down by another consciousness in another age. "News from Nowhere," less deservedly, is seldom referred to (like Morris's socialism, it is regarded as absurdly Utopian), and "The Dream of John Ball" practically never, though both in their way are great books, of profound social insight. We do not need of course such an excellent exhibition as that now to be seen at the Victoria and Albert Museum, well worth a visit, or the accounts given in Mr. Paul Bloomfield's full and first rate biography and Mr. Montague Weekley's shorter and more superficial sketch,* to remind us that Morris was very much more than author and socialist; that he was, besides, painter, printer, calligraphist and designer and manufacturer of furniture,

* "William Morris." By Paul Bloomfield. 10s. (Barker.)

"William Morris." By Montague Weekley. Great Lives Series. 2s. (Duckworth.)

wall-paper, tapestry, stained glass, painted tiles, carpets, rugs and embroideries—and all of first quality. Even on the swiftest survey it is impossible not to be impressed by the range and degree of his talents. Everywhere, in all of these products of his incredible activity (it was something too happy to be termed industry!), there is authentic beauty of word or line or colour or design. Yes, there is beauty there, and yet it is an exotic beauty for all its essential Englishness. We have no wish to imitate it. We find it easier to admire in museums than to imagine as integral part of our daily lives and home. Modern art is a stripped thing; here is ornateness, decoration, for its own sake. In almost everything he wrote and made, those born since his death are apt to find, on the surface, something too much, and beneath it something too little.

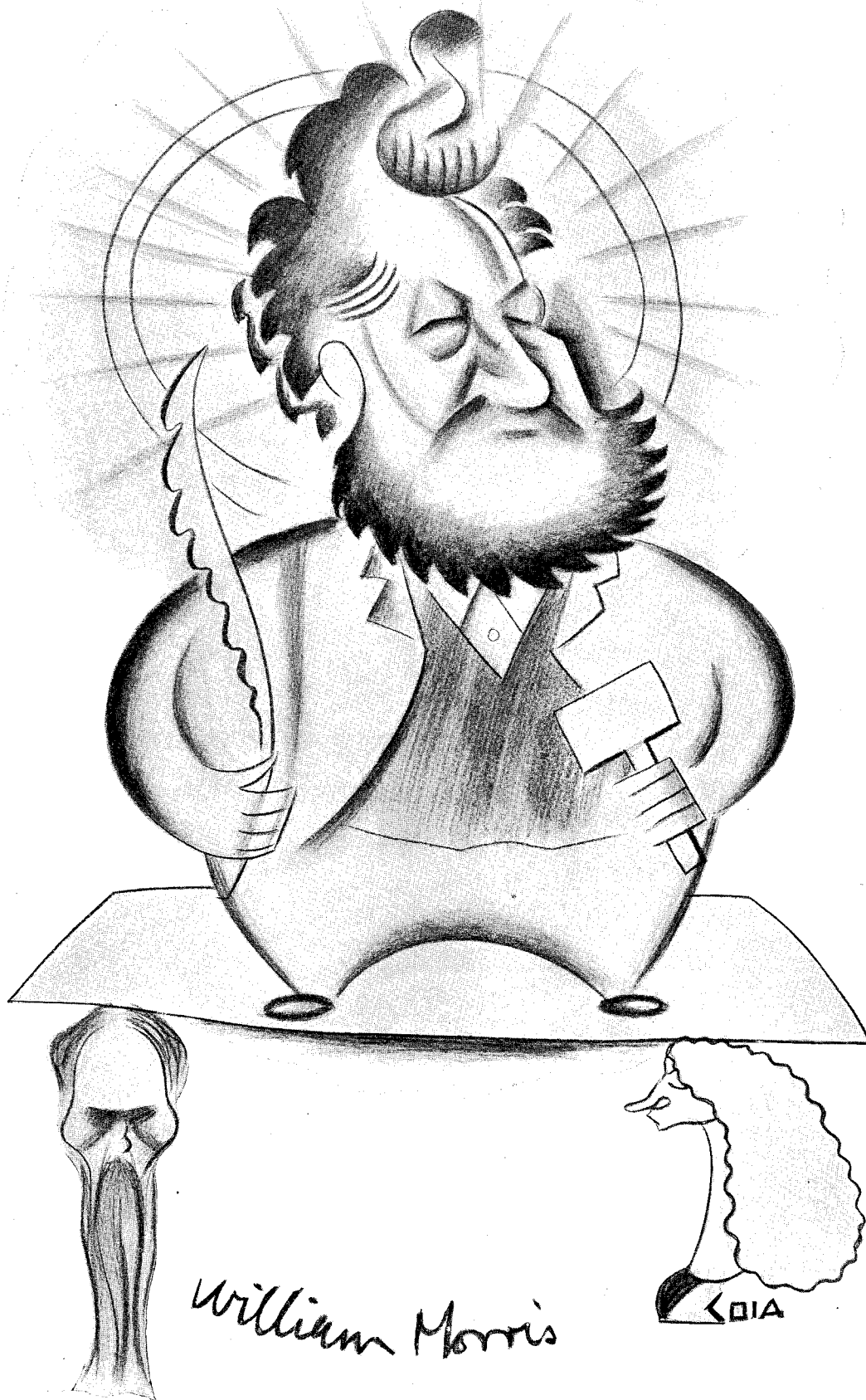
Does this imply then that Morris has no meaning for us to-day? By no means, though it may suggest the need of a new point of view. We are all too apt to ask that a man be one thing, completely express himself in some one mode. That Morris never did. He is not to be found solely, or even in essence, in his books, or in his designs, or in his politics. Each aspect must be complemented by all the others—only then have we the whole man. In particular do we need to see his art and his socialism in relation, for each, properly seen, is the warrant of the seriousness of the other. In his art he lived as completely, as satisfyingly, as perhaps is possible for any man in his and our age, and he wished that all men might live so. When it became clear to him that in our present form of civilisation such life was simply impossible for the bulk of mankind he proposed not to abandon the ideal but to change the system. Because he took his art, what he gave to it and it to him, seriously, he became a socialist.

He had, it needs to be made quite clear, a view, derived from Ruskin, of art as the natural product of the pleasure of a man in his labour, something nearer to craftsmanship than what we commonly imply by the term, and at once more universally individual and less narrowly individualistic. It pertained to the workshop rather than the ivory tower, and it seemed to him the essential basis of a happy life, that a man should make and take pleasure in the making and thereby give pleasure to others. It is by this standard that his own work must be judged. It carried for him, and can carry for us, no metaphysical implications. That is why there is something not only irrelevant but fundamentally wrong in Mr. Weekley's comparison of "Sigurd the Volsung" with Melville's "Moby Dick." Simply they are not in the same category. Melville's was an esoteric work; even to-day its apocalyptic significances only begin to be appreciated. There was little of esotericism in Topsy Morris's productions; they are straightforward in the best sense.

He had but little liking for modern art in general. It was in Gothic art that, again impelled by Ruskin, he found that full flowering of the craftsman's joy in his task and his material that he himself had

ALL-OVER PATTERN

William Morris
as seen by Coia



experienced and that he coveted for others, for all. The Renaissance, he held, had ended and not begun a great art period, and the subsequent years had seen only the degradation of the craftsman—notably in the Industrial Revolution—and a false exaltation of art to be the luxury and plaything of the few. Even his own works were bought—could be bought—only by the wealthy!

So it was that he turned back persistently to dreams of the Middle Ages, and for that was deemed a romantic antiquarian. Romantic he may have been in the sense that the strength of his desires no doubt coloured his dreaming, but he was realist too, for it is the height of realism as of romanticism to insist that man cannot live by bread alone. So convinced was he of this that he was prepared to face, he even hoped for, a sudden revolution, an uprising of the people, to put an end to the society he saw about him. Otherwise, he asked, how could it end but “in a counting house on the top of a cinder-heap, with Podsnap’s drawing-room in the offing, and a Whig committee dealing out champagne to the rich and margarine to the poor in such convenient proportions as would make all men contented together, though the pleasure of the eyes was gone from the world, and the place of Homer was to be taken by Huxley”?

It is true that he did not hope or even want by revolution to bring back the world of the Middle Ages. As Mr. Bloomfield makes quite clear, he had no antagonism to either the machine or science as such; it was only their use for the enslavement and destruction of humanity by industrialism and war that he fought against. The world of his desire was no more than one in which human values were set before profits, wherein the power of the machine and of the scientist to increase dividends might be subordinated to the individual’s need to be a maker of things. Since it was inconceivable that this should come about in a society so totally constructed upon the profit-motive he saw no way but to end it. He was no economic determinist. He knew very little of economics. He once said: “I am asked if I believe in Marx’s theory of value. To speak quite frankly, I do not know what

Marx’s theory of value is, and I’m damned if I want to know.” But he knew the nature of man. He knew out of his own experience how necessary was creative activity to a full human life, even though many lacking that experience might deny the need even for themselves. That indeed was the danger, that modern civilisation might make robots of us all!

Against that he revolted. He saw it happening about him. He saw himself as a favoured exception in his life and his enlightenment, a man in a thousand in his relatively wealthy parentage and other opportunities. And even so he could not give his art to the people, nor to them an art of their own. It was necessary in the cause of his own art and of theirs that he should turn social rebel, declaring that “the only reasonable condition of society is that of pure communism,” and refusing and distrusting the makeshift compromises of what he termed “gas and water socialism.” Had he not done so, had he refused this final necessary step, then indeed he would have remained but a “mere” artist of his period, living in the present by virtue of his contribution to the unceasing flow of the English tradition, but even so standing apart from it, “living” for us in fact a little remotely.

Having done so, he takes on a new and especial significance, one at least implicit in Mr. Bloomfield’s able and extremely well-written study, one of the best books that have been produced on the subject. He becomes the very figure of Man Creative set in the midst of an age of Man Exploited. He points clearly and certainly to that realisation in which alone the modern artist can reach both maturity and fulfilment—the realisation that usury and art cannot live together, even that art may have to become a secondary matter until the profit-motive be abolished. “Popular art,” he declared, “has no chance of a healthy life, or indeed of a life at all, till we are on our way to fill up this terrible gap between riches and poverty. Doubtless many things will go towards filling it up, and if art must be one of those things, let it go. What business have we with art at all, unless all can share it? I am not afraid but that it will rise from the dead, whatever else lies there.”

THE POLITICS OF W. H. AUDEN

by Edgar Foxall

THE absorption of certain of the young modern poets with politics may be considered in two ways: as a reaction from the Georgian decline, and as an indication of the social unrest which exists in Europe at this time. The poet is being driven away from philosophy towards science.

The idea of science as the key to the new life is now pretty well discarded. The ease with which the results of scientific investigation may be misused is so frequently demonstrated, that a review of the whole industrial and economic situation is necessary. The application of scientific method to ordinary life has brought about increased material comforts, without altering the relations of the classes generally. The working class is still near enough to serfdom, despite the prophetic outbursts of H. G. Wells.

Certain popular newspapers are fond of reiterating that a new spiritual regeneration is imminent, but such does not seem to be the case. It is certainly not

a spiritual baptism through which Germany is now passing. On the other side, the doctrines of Marx have been recovered from the obscurity into which they had relapsed before the Shavian and Wellsian Utopias. In this country, apart from the few regular communists, their chief propagandist is the poet, W. H. Auden. A good artist himself, Auden has drawn others into the circle.

From his most important work up to now, “The Orators,” we get the impression of sincere political mindedness which sometimes blinds him to the unity essential in a good art work. Satire is the only effective medium by which political ideas can be conveyed in terms of art. And even in satire the idea must not be allowed to intrude unduly. It must be admitted that Auden has too frequently descended below the level of his own good satire to that of the sneer. He moves from the extremes of anger to the limits of his vision so quickly that the effect is occasionally hysterical.

Nevertheless, his sincerity is beyond question, and he will gain many followers in the next few years. In fact they are now sufficiently numerous to be called a school.

"The Orators" has been subjected to much inferior and unfair criticism. One critic, himself a minor poet, demanded to know why "this Auden" didn't go to Russia. "Because, I suppose, over there they'd shoot him for his bad verses." Others have tried to draw attention from his political ideas to the good pieces of writing in the book. Fortunately "The Orators" is strong enough to withstand appeals to distraction from its true significance. The work cannot be judged fairly by those who discriminate too nicely between the idea and the expression of it. Later it may stand or fall by its relation to the communist idea in a time of political crisis.

The politics of Wordsworth and Shelley are soon forgiven them, since they are vague enough to satisfy those who very loosely believe in something called Freedom. They cannot harm the most timid. By such nebulous references to the idea of liberty as we find in Wordsworth, or the leavings from the table of the Godwins which Shelley affected as his own politics, easily inspired emotions are satiated. But Auden's politics invite the disgust of the comfortable and the laughter of the secure. The Auden school at least has not made the error common to the Georgians—that of constantly mistaking the trivial for the simple.

Marx insisted that an effective revolution must be international in scope and proletarian in character. It is useless attempting to avoid the implication, and when Auden indulges in his indiscriminate sneers at all classes he misses the point. The Labour Party may be weak and the I.L.P. insipid, but they represent the nearest point of contact with the masses. Those who worked in the Socialist movement before the first Labour Government know well that it was no mean achievement.

Stephen Spender observed in *THE BOOKMAN* that the communist poets do not understand international politics or working-class conditions. The importance of an understanding of both these is obvious, but I cannot see how this lack of primal knowledge need debar them from protesting. Their disinterestedness may even add weight to their protest, as far as working-class conditions are concerned.

Hatred of injustice implies a bias which may affect a poet's work but is not the sum of his poetry. Mr. Auden has written very indifferent verses about communism, and excellent poetry. To consider two examples side by side:

"It's no use turning nasty
It's no use turning good
You're what you are and nothing you do
Will get you out of the wood
Out of a world that has had its day."

and, by comparison:

"Work west and northward, set up building.
Cities and years constricted to your scope,
All sorrow simplified, though almost all
Shall be as subtle when you are as tall:
Yet clearly in that almost all his hope
That hopeful falsehood cannot stem with love
The flood on which all move and wish to move."

These two examples, chosen from the first and fifth



Mr. W. H. Auden

numbers of Mr. Geoffrey Grigson's "New Verse," make the point. The first states a case without elaboration. It is clearly not intended to do more. In the second is revealed the nature of a conflict which goes deeper than the problems of the ordinary mind. The poet is aware of states of mind in which he seems the contemporary of a past which includes his own and the pasts of others. Death, or unrequited love, in the life of an individual cannot be circumscribed by absorption with a political idea, however deeply it may penetrate. Loss by death, or even thought about death in certain moods, produces effects which no economic change could ever reach. Our knowledge of the past, when we think about it, often becomes a barrier between us and the attempt to adjust our vision to the seeming necessities of the future. For those sufficiently sensitive to it, such a conflict is very real.

Communism has suffered more than any other political theory from the ignorance and prejudice of all classes. Many speak as though Marx had deliberately devised a system in which the rituals of bloodshed and chaos were inevitable. If Christianity were to be judged by the lives of the majority of Christians, it would appear a very feeble excuse for unnecessary social contact. Communism is not to be judged by the harsh discipline essential to illiterate peasants. The problems facing Stalin, like those which confronted Lenin, are as much racial as economic. That T. S. Eliot should be forced to write in an age when peerages can be had for the peddling of journalistic half-truths, does not involve his work in the nasty cycle which finds completion in upstart dictatorships. His work is significant by contrast with his times.

If Auden realises the long struggle towards a world state as a necessity of discipline, and an ideal which must strengthen those who undertake it, he is not to be blamed. We may regret his lapses from his own standards as an artist, but there are times when courage is as valuable as art, and to the homeless the Tate Gallery is not the equal of St. Martin's crypt.

PAUPER BRITAIN

by WALTER FANCOURT BELL

A simple statement of facts by a writer who has returned from a tour of the Midlands, where he has had unique opportunities of observing conditions in the industrial areas

A FEW days ago I lunched with a friend of mine who works in the Central Office of the Conservative Party in Westminster. While waiting for him to join me, I browsed about among the literature lying there in little heaps before being distributed among the constituencies. My eye caught a pamphlet on Russia—how the people did not have enough to eat, how the Five Year Plan was failing to provide them with the necessities of life.

After some minutes my friend joined me. A clever, earnest young man, who has just been adopted as National Government candidate for a constituency which he will probably hold. During lunch he did most of the talking. The country was prospering, thanks to the National Government. The Means Test was working smoothly in most places. The financial policy of the Government had been positively inspired. I asked him what he said to his constituents. "Oh—social uplift," came the reply; "belief in themselves and the aristocratic tradition which is true Toryism." Then followed a tirade against milk-and-water socialism with which I was inclined to agree. However, I felt tired and depressed, and my mind went back to a day in December of last year, when I attended Assizes in one of our large industrial towns in the Midlands.

With social uplift, starving Russia, sound finance and aristocratic tradition in my ears, I thought of an elderly man in the dock. I should say he was about sixty years old. He had tried to cut his wife's throat with a bread knife, and was indicted for attempted murder. The police read out his record. He had worked all his life in the jewellery trade until three years ago, when he had been sacked owing to trade depression. His wife was called into the witness-box. She appeared to be of the same age as her husband, happily married to him for thirty-four years. She gave her evidence quietly and with great dignity, striving hard to suppress her emotion. The prisoner had long exhausted his right to unemployment benefit. They had sunk into deeper and deeper poverty. The continual anxiety and lack of food had driven him to a state of chronic depression. Finally throughout July of last year they had subsisted on bread, and black currants which grew in the garden. One evening a friend offered the prisoner a drink—half a pint of beer—which went to his head, his stomach being weak through lack of food. He went home and tried to cut his wife's throat, as I have described. The Public Assistance Committee had heard nothing of the case—I suspect the reason being that this couple, like many others of the working-class, would sooner starve than submit to the inquisition of the Poor Law.

I wrote to the counsel in the case to find out whether he frequently encountered such cases in the courts. He replied: "Scarcely a week passes without I come in touch in the courts (outside this experience is just as frequent) with hardships brought about by the operation of the Means Test" (I had asked him specifically about that).

I propose to show in this article to the best of my ability, that the case which I have just described, while it may be an extreme one, is by no means exceptional; that hundreds of thousands of our people are existing at a standard far below that which is necessary to maintain health and efficiency. I propose further to demonstrate that the greater part of this suffering was initiated in the "economy" panic of 1931. Far better would it be for the Conservative Central Office to publish statistics about starvation in this England of which they are so proud, rather than pursue a study into unreliable data concerning the difficulties of Soviet Russia. Let us go further then, and inquire as to the number of paupers in our midst, as to the rates of benefit paid to unemployed, the object and effect of the Means Test and what authorities such as the B.M.A. have to say about them. Finally let us determine whether the financial state of the country justifies the result of our inquiries, and what policy we should urge the Government to adopt.

Let me deal first with the registered unemployed, because they mostly enjoy the standard benefit. At December 18th, 1933, there were 1,561,742 men registered as wholly unemployed in Great Britain, an increase of roughly 4,800 over the previous month, but 247,600 less than at the same date in 1932. Forty-one per cent. of these were drawing full benefit under the Insurance Fund. The chief rates are 15s. 3d. per week for a man, 8s. for an adult dependent and 2s. for each child below the age of fourteen years. They were drawing that benefit as assured, no inquiries being made as to additional income. However, forty-six per cent. of the registered unemployed were applying for transitional benefit. That is to say they have exhausted their right to standard benefit and, under the Economy Act of 1931, they are compelled to apply to the Public Assistance Committee of the Borough or County Council of their locality, who inquire into their financial position. They are subject to the Means Test. Prior to 1931, if they could show that they were ready and willing to work and that they were likely to be re-employed in their trade, they were allowed to draw benefit for a further period without the fear of "going on the rates." Those who had savings, or lodgers in the house, or were receiving a pension, thus enjoyed a higher standard of living than those who had no assets. To-day the applicant for transitional benefit must answer a questionnaire stating, among other things, the amount of his savings, what income is coming into the house either from lodgers or relatives, the amount of any pension received by a member of the household, and whether a society is assisting, such as the British Legion. An official of the Legion told me the other day that he arranged to call after the relieving officer had made his inquiries, so that Legion help should not be taken into account.

The result of all this is that the standard of living amongst hundreds of thousands of the working-class has been lowered to that of the Poor Law. Indeed

many who are sufficiently fortunate to be working are forced down to this level through being made to support their destitute relatives. The extent to which this system is operating appears from the latest available figures of applicants for transitional benefit under the Means Test. Between September 4th and October 7th, 1933, 73,524 persons applied, one-sixth were refused all benefit, one-third were allowed a reduced rate and only one-half were allowed benefit in full. This system saves the taxpayer £15,000,000 per annum.

It is difficult to give specific details of the individual incomes of the unemployed, because they vary according to locality. There is evidence however of widespread distress. The *Lancet* of January 12th this year says: "That the mass of middle-class people are only now beginning to learn of the type of physical privation possible in depressed areas, where hardly anyone has resources beyond insurance, benefit or relief." This was said in reference to the report of the committee of the B.M.A. which investigated the conditions of the unemployed in the distressed areas, and drew up what they considered to be a minimum diet for the maintenance of health and efficiency. They contended that the minimum cost of food alone for an adult should be 5s. 10½d. per week, and from 2s. 8d. to 5s. 4d. for children according to age. For an average family consisting of a man, wife and three children (ages ranging from six to fourteen), the committee laid down a minimum cost of food at 22s. 6½d. per week. When it is realised that 29s. 3d. is the maximum unemployment benefit which can be drawn by such a family, that standard is well-nigh impossible of achievement. Rents alone absorb anything from 6s. per week in a slum to 9s. in a Council house, and these are optimistic figures.

For confirmation of the B.M.A. report comes the result of an investigation in Newcastle-on-Tyne, where it was found that there was a deficiency of proteins in the diet of the unemployed of fifty per cent. in slums and sixty-five per cent. in Council houses. After paying rent there remains 3s. 5½d. for food in the slums and 3s. 1¼d. in the Council houses. At Stockton-on-Tees, on the Council estates where tenants pay a rent of 8s. 10½d. instead of 4s. 7½d. in the slums, the death-rate has increased amongst the occupants of the new houses by forty per cent. Before 1931 the rate was 25·29 per 1,000, in 1932 40·79, the rate for Stockton as a whole being 12·07. It would be both tedious and unnecessary to elaborate further. For anyone wishing seriously to understand the tragedies which are going on in the industrial districts of England to-day, I recommend that they read "Love on the Dole," by Walter Greenwood, and "Hungry England," by Fenner Brockway.

When the foregoing information has been digested, it will not be surprising to learn that Poor Law authorities are assisting over 1,250,000 people from the rates. This is at least 300,000 more than in September, 1931. When these new paupers read in the London papers of our prosperity, they doubtless appreciate the irony of their position. When a reduction in the figures of the registered unemployed is announced they know from experience that a large proportion of the reduction should be attributed to withdrawals from the register.

Is it possible for decent-minded people to tolerate a situation such as this? Even when it is admitted that under the present system the profit motive must be fostered and not destroyed by taxation, it would be

folly indeed to continue as we do. For what is happening? Every day that the workless are underfed, the seeds of tuberculosis, rickets and other forms of debility gain their hold. They may be cured by the hospitals, but the old conditions soon resuscitate the disease. Bitterness and despair drive some to suicide, some to crime and others to revolution. Hitler marched to power on the empty stomachs of the German masses. It will be the same here. So before clamouring for a reduction of income tax in the next Budget, for an increase in Navy Estimates or even for the restoration of Civil Service cuts, ease the burden of the unemployed. I suggest that the remedy is quite simple and not very expensive.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer will probably realise a surplus of £50,000,000 at the end of the financial year. He should be given clearly to understand that all classes expect the whole of the ten per cent. cut in insurance benefit made in 1931 to be restored. That would cost about £4,500,000. The administration of the Means Test will be transferred to a national authority on June 1st next, and as the new Unemployment Insurance Bill is before Parliament, it is unnecessary to go into that now. However, the agitation against harsh administration of the Test should continue, and the Minister of Health should be urged to anticipate the restoration of the 1931 rates of benefit by circularising local authorities to the effect that the B.M.A. estimates for food be their standard when assessing needs.

Finally let us contemplate an immediate step. A study of the revenue returns, which are published weekly in *The Times*, will disclose the fact that over £5,000,000 have been paid off the debt on the Insurance Fund during the current financial year. The debt is now being reduced by between a quarter and half a million pounds a week. This has been effected by the reduction in unemployment, the increased contributions of those at work, and a continual removal of the permanent unemployed on to the Poor Law. Would it not be possible to forgo some of that debt reduction? It is a negligible factor in the present Budget owing to the very low rates of interest at present in force, which are likely to continue. This saving could be applied to raising the children's allowance. An increase of 1s. would cost £2,000,000. It is on married men with three or more children that the greatest hardship falls at present. In a Poor Law home the average cost of a child's maintenance is estimated to be 4s. 6½d. per week; only 2s. is allowed for the child in the home of the man on the dole. Therefore for every child dependent on such a man, he must supplement the child's allowance by 2s. 6½d. from his own. It is true that there are school meals provided in some cases, but a cursory glance at the reports from which I have quoted will reveal the urgency of such a concession.

We can afford large cruisers, a Codex Sinaiticus and extra squadrons for the Air Force. Supplementary estimates will be presented to Parliament for all these. Cannot even the warmongers afford nothing for those whom they may one day require to man the squadrons or cruisers? Or are we to leave them to grow up embittered, vowing in their hearts that they will one day smash the system which displays food and clothing in abundance before their eyes, but deprives them of the enjoyment of them? On the answer the future of Democracy depends. The sands are running out.

“OUTWORKERS WANTED!” by MARY EDMONDS

The concluding portion of the article on Sweated Labour in England to-day, containing some practical suggestions for remedying the scandal of

“THE SONG OF THE SHIRT” IN OUR OWN TIMES

III

TIME AND MONEY IN THE DRESSMAKING AND TAILORING TRADES

In the course of these investigations, I visited a girls' club in one of the poorest parts of Hoxton. The ages of the girls ranged from fourteen to over twenty, and most of them were employed in the dressmaking, tailoring, or allied trades.

A girl of fifteen told me that she worked in a dress-making factory from half-past eight in the morning till six o'clock at night, for 10s. a week. For several weeks before Christmas, however, she was working from eight-thirty till seven each night, and for this she received 1s. 6d. overtime.

As I was talking to her, a child walked into the room. She looked about twelve, but the warden of the club assured me that she was fourteen. She was small and pale, with dark shadows under her eyes. Her whole bearing was listless and she looked worn out. It was then after nine o'clock at night, and the girl, who was employed in a tailoring factory, told me that she had worked from eight in the morning till eight that evening, and that these hours were to continue for another five or six weeks, during the rush period. Normally her hours were eight to six-thirty, and she received 9s. a week. For the extra one and a half hours each day she received 2½d. an hour. One cannot help feeling that, to a child at the most crucial stage of her development, mentally, physically and psychologically, an hour and a half which might have been spent in relaxation, recreation or even education is a bitterly hard price to pay for fourpence. She did not work on Saturdays, but this is no compensation for the long hours she worked during the week.

Another girl of fourteen said that her work was sewing the ends on to men's braces, and at this she worked from eight-thirty till six o'clock during the week and from half-past eight till one o'clock on Saturdays, and received 9s. a week.

I spoke to two older girls, who were both in their early twenties. One told me that she had been offered work at Hayes, Middlesex, but as she was to get only 25s. a week, and her fares would be 10½d. a day, she did not think it would be worth her while to accept it. It is difficult for a girl to decide what to do in such a case, especially as, if she refuses work offered her by the Labour Exchange, she is struck off the books for six weeks. The other, an embroideress, worked for a Jewish firm. Her hours were eight till six-thirty on weekdays and eight till one on Saturdays. For this she earned 25s. a week, out of which she had to pay for fares, lunches, clothes and a room. She said that every second of waste time was eliminated and the girls were obliged to work in complete silence.

This was an interesting corollary to some facts I had learned the day before. The owner of an embroidery firm told me that he had been given an order by a famous West End firm for embroidering some quilts. He reckoned that the work would cost him 2s. an hour, including labour and overhead charges, and allowing for four hours work and a profit of 2s. 6d., he charged 10s. 6d. He was told that the identical work could have been done in the East End for 3s. 6d.

Further inquiries into hours of work showed that girls working in Houndsditch and East End warehouses and textile firms, from nine in the morning till seven-thirty or eight in the evening, or even later, earned about 15s. a week.

In every case quoted here, the hours of work demanded by the employer are quite legal.

No new Factory Act has been passed since 1901, and the hours of work prescribed then for textile factories are as

follows. The period of employment, except on Saturdays, may be from six a.m. till six p.m., seven a.m. till seven p.m., or eight a.m. till eight p.m. On Saturday, if beginning at six, work must end at twelve-thirty, with one hour off for a meal: if only half an hour off is allowed, work must stop at midday. Similarly, if beginning at seven, work must end at one o'clock, and so on. Women and young persons must not be employed for more than four and a half hours without at least half an hour for a meal.

In 1909, the first Trade Board Act was passed, its objects being the amelioration of sweated wages. The primary function of any trade board is the legal fixation of minimum rates of wages. Under the Act of 1909, no specific powers relating to fixing of hours or overtime rates of wages were granted to the Trade Boards.

The only limit to the number of hours that a person could be required to work was the Factory and Workshops Act minimum of sixty hours a week for women and young persons, with restriction to the number of hours per day.

In 1918, the Board declared the normal number of hours in the trade to be as follows: in any week, forty-eight hours; on any day other than Saturdays, Sundays and customary public and statutory holidays, nine hours. At the same time they were empowered to fix overtime wages, so that, though they had no direct power to prevent an employer from keeping his factory open for more than the normal number of hours per week, indirectly they gained some control, by forcing him to pay higher rates for the time he chose to employ his workers after the normal number of hours had elapsed.

It has been asserted in the daily press that, in the administration of the Trade Board Act, employers were given great latitude in interpreting their responsibilities. A case was reported in the *Daily Herald* of March 2nd, 1925, that women, during a busy season, were obliged to take work home with them to finish, and that employers managed to evade overtime payment.

Nevertheless the Trade Boards have been successful in causing tremendous improvements in rates of pay. The estimates given in the New Survey of London Life and Labour are that since the 1906 Board of Trade inquiry, the average rise in weekly wages in Ready Made Tailoring has been about 30 per cent. for men and over 90 per cent. for women: in the Bespoke trade, the increases are 15 per cent. for men and 50 per cent. for women.

In Dressmaking, the average increase in women's wages, allowing for the change in money values, has been about 40 per cent.

The Trade Board minimum rates of pay to-day are as follows: for a female worker of over twenty, in the Retail Bespoke Dressmaking trade, 7½d. an hour: for learners, 1¼d., 2¼d., 3¼d., and 5d. an hour for the first four years of employment respectively; for female workers of over twenty years of age, in the Wholesale Manufacturing Branch of the trade, 7d. an hour: for learners, 1¼d., 3d., 4½d., and 6¼d. an hour for the first four years of employment.

The lowest rate for any adult male worker in the tailoring trade is 1s. 1d. an hour, paid to a plain machinist.

The equivalent rate for a woman is 8d. an hour.

Efforts are made on the part of the Government to see that these Trade Board minimum rates are enforced, but the task of inspection is an arduous one and the number of inspectors is inadequate.

The maximum number of textile factories which has ever been inspected in a year is 25 per cent. Last year, owing to Government economies, it was only 22 per cent. There are approximately two million people covered by the Trade Board Acts, and there are fifty-five inspectors—thirteen less than in 1930.

When an inspector discovers that an employer is underpaying his staff, steps are taken to force the firm to pay up arrears. If necessary they may be prosecuted.

A case was reported, a few years ago, of a dressmaker who paid one worker 8s. instead of 17s. 6d., another 16s. instead of 26s. 11d., and a third 14s. instead of 24s.

Another firm was prosecuted for infringement of Trade Board Regulations. No copy of the Trade Board notice had been put up, no wage book with a record of the number of hours worked had been kept, and no less than £292 18s. 10d. was found due and ordered to be paid to ten workers for just under two years' work.

Nevertheless reports show that inspectors find it extremely difficult to recover arrears of wages for indoor piece workers, and seldom or never can they be recovered for outworkers.

In the *Tailor and Garment Worker* for June, 1933, the following striking figures were published:

In the Ready Made and Wholesale Tailoring Trade, out of approximately 6,000 establishments, 1,399 were inspected, 26,000 workers' wages were examined, and arrears paid to 604 of them, amounting to a total of £2,332 10s. 9d. Less than 100 of these were piece workers, and the amount of arrears recovered for them was less than £80.

In the Wholesale Mantle and Costume trade, 1,000 establishments were inspected; 124 were found not to be complying with the Trade Board's determinations, and arrears of wages were paid in all to 361 workers, amounting to £1,127 19s. 8d., approximately £40 of this being paid to piece workers.

IV

SUMMARY

It is evident from an examination of the facts concerning the tailoring and dressmaking trades, that there are two main needs for reform.

1. The pay of the worker is too low compared with the retail price.

There is an enormous discrepancy between the wages paid to the worker and the retail price of the garment. However the details of the costing may be explained to show that after discounting such items as rent, upkeep of establishment and sales staff, only a bare margin of profit is being made, it nevertheless remains true that the principal factor in the business is the human element engaged in manufacturing the garments, and that this should receive the major consideration. As little as 3 per cent. of the sale price of the garment is often paid to the worker.

An example has been quoted of a jumper made for 1s. 6d. which was sold for 50s. A woman who can afford to pay 50s. for a jumper could equally well pay 51s. 6d., and if this extra money were paid to the worker her wages would be increased 100 per cent.

In most cases it is the sub-contractor who is paid too little, so that he in turn must underpay his workers.

There is a great deal of discontent moreover amongst women in the tailoring trade, owing to the considerably lower wages which they receive, in comparison with men, for the same work.

It has been estimated that employers make an extra 2s. a garment on work done by women compared with men. Already there are ten women to one man in the industry.

2. Hours of work are too long, especially for young people

Children of fourteen may still work from eight in the morning till eight at night, and the Trade Board has not been empowered to restrict these hours.

The causes for these evils are the following:

1. High Rents.
2. Foreign Competition.
3. Sales of Bankrupt Stock.
4. Insufficient Organisation in the Trade.
5. Out of date Factory Act.
6. Insufficient staff to enforce Trade Board Regulations.

To suggest remedies is always more difficult than to demonstrate wrongs, and this is especially so in the field of political economy. The first two causes of sweating in the trade, high rents and foreign competition, are so deep-rooted that the suggestions for their cure must depend on the politics of those who made them. This is no place for a treatise on political economy, but it is necessary to touch upon these facts, lest the reader should imagine that the writer regards the suggestions made below as a panacea for the evils of sweating.

1. High Rents

Many retailers, and others, believe that high rents are the biggest factor in trade depression to-day. Though not advocating any particular plan here, it is only fair to mention that Henry George, in putting forward his scheme for the "taxation of land values" as long ago as 1870, predicted a series of booms alternating with ever deepening depressions, and laid the blame on private ownership of land (not on capital). He claimed that by turning over the ownership of land to the State, all poverty would be abolished.

2. Foreign Competition

The question of foreign competition, which affects chiefly the third class trade, brings us to the controversial point of Free Trade and Protection, but only fanatical Free-traders refuse to admit that tariffs or exclusion should be used against goods produced under bad labour conditions.

All but extreme protectionists and isolationists will admit the advantages of Free Trade, provided that the standard of living in the exporting countries can be raised to that of our own, rather than the low conditions abroad tending to drag our conditions down to their level. The flood of foreign goods produced under sweated conditions must be stopped.

3. Sales of Bankrupt Stock

A further factor, depressing the prices of the third class trade, is undercutting prices by the sale of bankrupt stock. As far as I know, no remedies have yet been suggested for this state of affairs. It would seem that Governmental control is needed to prohibit the retailing of bankrupt stock at prices which undercut the normal trade. All methods of enforcing such control present difficulties, whether it be achieved by Governmental bidding at auctions, by an excise tax to raise the price, or by direct regulation of the retail prices. Possibly this evil must be relied upon to revert to negligible proportions during times of prosperity.

4. Insufficient Organisation in the Trade

There is, quite clearly, insufficient organisation in the trade itself, but the difficulties encountered by union officials are legion. There is no compulsory registration for persons doing work at home. Supervision is almost impossible. In fact the authorities do not always know of the existence of the home workers. In many cases the men and women listed as home workers are sub-contractors or agents between the city factory and the district in which they live. The work is made up by women living in the neighbourhood, the employer being responsible for payment only of the one person on his list as an outworker.

In more normal times, when the man earned enough to keep his wife and children, the cure for the evils surrounding outworking would be to abolish the practice entirely. To do so at the moment would entail a great deal of hardship to many women who, though tied to their homes, rely on this as an important source of income. However the obvious need at the moment is for compulsory registration of all outworkers.

There is a great need for more direct control between the worker and the retailer, to the exclusion of the middle man. If this could be brought about, there would be a greater proportion of the sale price available for distribution amongst the workers.

5. Out of date Factory Act

There has been no revision of the Factory Act of 1901. With efforts being made on the one hand for the raising of the school leaving age, for day continuation schools and

adult education schemes, it seems strange that a young person on leaving school at fourteen can immediately be allowed to work the maximum number of hours permitted by an Act which is thirty-three years old.

The following hours would surely not be unreasonable :

- From 14 to 16 years of age .. 40 hours a week, e.g. 8 a.m.-12 noon, 1 p.m.-4 p.m., 8 a.m.-1 p.m. (Sats.), and no overtime to be permitted.
- From 16 to 18 years of age .. 44 hours a week and no overtime to be permitted.
- From 18 to 21 years of age .. 48 hours a week and overtime to be permitted only up to 52 hours a week.
- Over 21 years of age Overtime rates beyond the normal Trade Board 48 hours to be: for the first hour, time and a half; after the first hour, double pay.

The fight for increase in payment has been slowly gaining

ground and will probably continue to do so, but the problem of hours of employment has remained untouched.

Certain amendments are also necessary to the Trade Board Acts in order to achieve their intention—a minimum wage for workers covered by the Acts, and a check on employers evading their responsibilities.

I have been informed that employers frequently avoid the payment of "waiting time" which the Act enforces, provided the worker is on the premises of the employer with his knowledge and consent, by requesting the worker to clock out during waiting periods. It is no uncommon thing for workers to wait several hours each week without payment.

6. Insufficient Inspection Staff

One of the Government economies has been to reduce the number of inspectors. Though the inspection staff do magnificent work, at least five times their number is required to ensure that Trade Board regulations are being observed.

CINEMA AND PROPAGANDA

by E. G. Cousins

THE word "Propaganda" has for most people an ominous sound, quite unrelated to its real meaning.

Originally denoting a committee of cardinals in charge of foreign missions, the term has come to mean "efforts, schemes or principles of propagation"; and as such effort becomes a crusade when you conduct it, and propaganda when it is directed at convincing you, the word has fallen upon evil days.



E. G. Cousins

In Filmland as elsewhere propaganda is suspect, but for a different reason. The princes of that fantastic realm of celluloid fear it, not because they are afraid of being converted (only the sight of a rival prince making a million dollars by different methods can effect this), but in terrified solicitude for the safety of their overlord, Entertainment-value.

This latter is the be-all and end-all of Hollywood and Wardour Street, whose inhabitants cannot see beyond the actual current cash receipts at the box-office—indeed their field of vision is frequently limited to last year's receipts.

The broader issues, out beyond the horizon of immediate or past profits, are an uncharted area into which the film magnate is prudently unwilling to venture.

That is why he shuns "Propaganda" as determinedly as the last bluebottle of summer avoids the flypaper. He is a wily creature, a survivor through fitness, and he is not going to be caught if he can help it.

But caught in what? Let us examine this flypaper, and discover whether it is really so lethal.

The public, announce the wiseacres (in the specially firm tones they employ to convince themselves as well as their hearers), don't *want* propaganda.

To begin with, is this true? One of the most successful films ever made, financially as well as artistically, was "All Quiet on the Western Front."

It is not germane to argue that the Universal Company

meant that picture purely as entertainment. The book from which it was faithfully reconstructed was anti-war propaganda. Remarque attempted, by depicting the horror and futility of warfare, to influence his readers against war, and the film followed suit.

"Ah, yes," admit the anti-propagandists, spreading deprecating hands. "But it was entertainment too, wasn't it?"

That, ladies and gentlemen, is my point.

It was indeed first-class entertainment, and I agree that it was this element that ensured its success; but I also maintain that all propaganda is capable of such screen treatment as to make it vitally interesting, and therefore "good box-office."

The trouble with the so-called propaganda film is that it is usually made by or at the instance of a society or an institution which wishes to propagate a certain principle, but which has hardly any idea of what constitutes a good film, or how cinema may be best utilised. A "story" is introduced for "entertainment value," and its logical development is distorted in order to subordinate it to the major theme.

This process rarely results in anything but a mess, condemned alike by critics and audiences, and thereafter regarded as an awful example by exhibitors, who should rather be concerned with trying to diagnose its failure.

Such a holocaust as has recently taken place in the finances of American filmland shows plainly that it is the *non*-propaganda film which menaces the box-office.

In support of this contention I would instance the enormous success with which films were attended from the very moment that they began to propagate any belief at all.

At first, as the elder of us recall, cinema appealed solely by virtue of its novelty and cheapness. Pictures actually moved; admission to see them cost only a few pence.

Before that dual appeal had worn off, stories were introduced—simple enough at first, and all conforming to certain well-defined specifications.

Virtue must remain intact, heroism and unselfishness be rewarded, vice and villainy punished, age respected and cherished, childhood innocent and (whenever feasible) pathetic, and true love rewarded.

In other words, faith, hope, charity, decency, mutual tolerance and respect, and the essential perfection of

this best of all possible worlds were propagated for all they were worth; and this was done with such high regard for entertainment-value that the whole family went to the cinema together. The "neighborhood house" was considered as suitable for attendance *en famille* during the week as was the meeting-house on Sunday.

Therein lay the enormous, the almost incredible financial success of films—a success more sudden and more complete than has been known in any other industry. Films were in effect (the effect on the box-office) sold to the whole family as individuals—not merely to the family as a group; and princes were enthroned in high places to which they had been carried on the crest of a wave of prosperity whose most rudimentary principles they but dimly appreciated, attributing their success to their own astuteness and the gullibility of the fool-public.

It has hardly been realised to what extent the coming of talkies (let the prim and pedantic say "audient films" if they must) affected production personnel. Not that all or nearly all heads of the industry as it stood were scrapped and replaced, although certainly the necessary refinancing still further Semitised the seats of the mighty; but almost every production company suddenly found itself relying on the experience and opinions of strange new executives and technicians from the theatre proper and the physics laboratory—men who knew all about the theory and practice of stage-production or sound-reproduction, but nothing whatsoever about films.

These men, having seized the reins of government, proceeded to dictate a new policy—with, it seems probable, but dim realisation of its essential difference from the old.

From now on, films were merely to entertain—and they could best entertain by being startling, revolutionary, if necessary shocking. Stories were to be constructed with careful regard for the probabilities as we live our lives—with muddled reasoning and uncontrolled passions—but cynically oblivious of any universal pattern of which

those lives might be an essential part.

In other words, they ceased to propagate human values and began merely to mirror human shortcomings—since the sins of our neighbours are supposed to be our most vital interest and therefore "good box-office."



A scene from "Gabriel Over the White House"

This, more than any other single factor, contributed to the parlous state in which the American film companies find themselves to-day—because it killed family filmgoing.

Let me quote an example in illustration of this.

While staying in New Jersey last year, I went with some friends to see "A Farewell to Arms" at their "neighborhood-house."

My friends' reactions were so immediate and pronounced (they declared against the practicability of "family filmgoing," and even the desirability of filmgoing at all, under modern conditions), that I was moved to inquire as to the film's effect among their large circle of acquaintances.

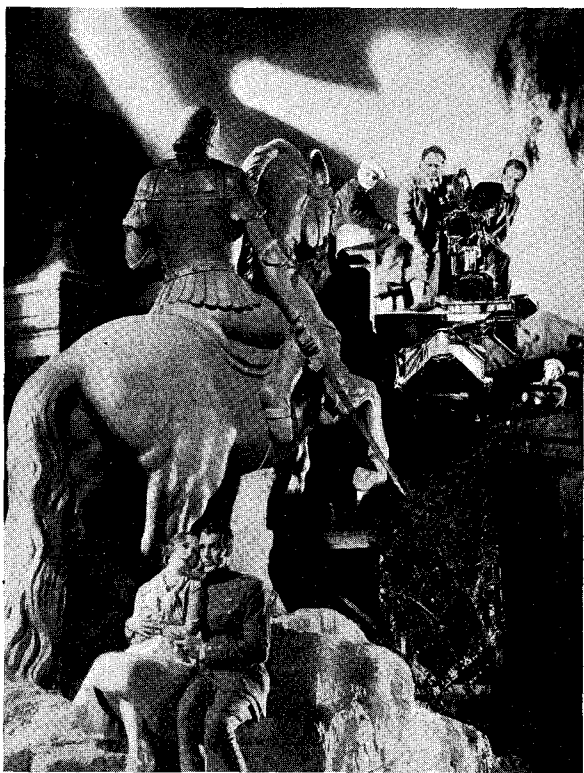
The objection boiled down to the perfectly reasonable one that, in this film, actions were deprived of their equal and opposite reactions. In life we expect them to be so widely separated that their relativity is inapparent; but we expect novels, stage plays and films to correlate action and reaction, cause and effect, within observable bounds, and thus propagate the inescapable logic of Life.

Such films, with their complete reversal of values as we in our conscience and experience know them to be, leave us (and by "us" I mean the average decent filmgoer in his millions) with a sense of outrage. Our emotions have been appealed to, our reason scorned.

"Gabriel Over the White House" shows a President of the United States in internal affairs opposing brute force with moral strength, and we feel in our innermost consciousness that he is on the right tack; then unaccountably we find him, on reaching the wider realm of international affairs, achieving universal peace by means of a super-efficient air service and a strong naval alliance with Britain!

In this case two opposite causes are being propagated in one film—the cause of moral worth and the cause of armed power—and between these two stools it falls to the ground.

Propaganda must be single and convinced to carry conviction.



From Ernest Hemingway's "A Farewell to Arms"
(Paramount Picture)

Brief Chronicles : Films

About forty feature films will be generally released during March. Ten of them, I think, are worth choosing for mention here; three are British and the rest American. Three out of ten may seem a modest proportion, but it is not so bad in relation to Hollywood's much larger total output; and a year or two ago it might have been difficult to find one British film worth recommending during a whole month.

It is still fairly easy for the casual film-goer to encounter a British film which will incline him to avoid all British productions in future. But for these unhappy lapses British producers are not always to blame. The Cinematograph Act requires every American renting company to offer for hire a certain number of British pictures every year. But the best British producing firms mostly have their own renting organisations. Hence an American renter may often be compelled to finance the production of British films in order to have enough to meet his own quota needs. This financing is usually done as cheaply as possible. The American renter simply wants a picture to put on the market; however bad it may be, it will still rank as a legal quota offering. And if it is bad enough to serve as the worst possible advertisement for British product, the American renter need not feel unduly depressed. He has complied with the law—and probably a good many film-goers have been encouraged to prefer American films in future.

I am not suggesting that all American renting firms indulge habitually in this Machiavellian policy. By no means. But anyone who is unlucky enough to encounter an unusually feeble British picture should notice whether it is distributed by an American firm. If so, he will be fairly safe in concluding that it is a "quota production," made cheaply and hurriedly in order to obey the law, and not a fair specimen of what British studios turn out nowadays when they are free to do their best.

Let us now look at the month's programme. The best choice for the week beginning March 5th is perhaps "One Sunday Afternoon" (Paramount)—Gary Cooper in a quiet Middle-Western tale, illustrating aspects of that everyday American life which the screen is still too apt to neglect. Gary Cooper, a small-town dentist, is unexpectedly required to treat the man who years before had first beaten him in love and afterwards goaded him into losing his job. A flash-back tells the story; it has a few unconvincing episodes, but is well produced and well acted, with unobtrusive period details and a good deal of human warmth.

This week also brings two British pictures that deserve to be mentioned—"Aunt Sally" (Gaumont) and "The Girl from Maxims" (London Films). "Aunt Sally," a light-hearted tale of the theatre with gangster interludes, is largely a vehicle for the varied talents and energies of Miss Cicely Courtneidge. She dances, sings, mimics—is asked perhaps to do rather too much, for the plot is strained and there are moments when the action hesitates between burlesque and straightforward adventure. However

"THE CONSTANT NYMPH"— AND A BRITISH FILM WARNING

Courtneidge gives a positively heroic display of comedy athletics.

"The Girl from Maxims," directed by Alexander Korda, sets out to give life to an ancient type of farcical plot by dressing it up in an elaborately entertaining period setting. The period is the "gay nineties"; the scene is Paris; and the plot concerns the embarrassments of a respectable surgeon (Leslie Henson) who becomes innocently involved with a music-hall dancer. Without the presence of Mr. Henson, admirably supported by Mr. George Grossmith as

an irascible general, and without the ingenious period decorations, there would not be much left of the film. As it is there are dull patches, but Mr. Korda has handled the whole thing with so much enthusiasm that the total effort is surprisingly lively.

The following week, beginning March 12th, offers a choice between Maurice Chevalier in "The Way to Love" (Paramount) and Rod la Rocque in "S.O.S. Iceberg" (Universal). "The Way to Love" is mainly for confirmed Chevalier fans. He appears, supported by Edward Everett Horton and Ann Dvorak, as a



A Scene from "The Constant Nymph"

Directed for Gaumont by Basil Dean

young Frenchman with the strange ambition to be the "best guide in Paris." The story is a mixture of sex, sentiment and farce; it begins and ends fairly well, but dawdles interminably towards the middle. "S.O.S. Iceberg" is also hampered by a weak story, but it includes moments of adventurous excitement and some finely photographed arctic landscapes.

The best of the releases for March 26th are "Turn Back the Clock" (M.G.M.) and "The Constant Nymph" (Gaumont). "Turn Back the Clock" has an ingenious story of a man who is allowed to dream most of his life over again with full knowledge of a future that includes the War. The working out of this difficult theme is not entirely successful, but it introduces some effective satirical comedy, and Lee Tracy is well cast as the hero.

"The Constant Nymph," directed by Basil Dean, attempts the impossible task of condensing Miss Margaret Kennedy's intricate novel into eighty minutes or so of screen action. Character development is inevitably sacrificed, and Florence is from the first so unpleasant that the infatuation of Lewis Dodd (Brian Aherne) is difficult to accept. Also Mr. Dean is much better at handling individual scenes than he is at weaving his scenes together into a flowing unity. But many of the individual scenes are very well done; there are pleasant glimpses of Tyrolean scenery; and Victoria Hopper, as Tessa, is a genuine discovery. Occasionally she minces her words, and she is not so immediately appealing as Miss Edna Best was in the same part on the stage. But Tessa's loyalty and courage, and her precocious insight into Lewis's character

—these qualities are convincingly revealed in Miss Hopper's performance, which is simple, direct and at times very moving.

by
Charles Davy

Brief Chronicles : Theatre

As I write this, the proletariat of two European capitals have been bombed, machine-gunned and ridden down since seven o'clock yesterday morning. It is now exactly 8.30 p.m., and of theatre audiences in London at the moment, the only one which will see a production with the faintest political flavour will sit through a play about a king who died five hundred and twelve years ago, written by a grossly misinformed playwright with the social conscience of an Australian aborigine. And in that play (the Alhambra "Henry V") we are presented with the spectacle of fifteenth century Englishmen making wanton war on their nearest neighbours for no sane reason at all.

Near the end of this strange play a list of the English dead was read over; immediately it was finished the entire cast marched briskly forward to the footlights, dropped to its knees and sang the Te Deum to the accompaniment of an American organ (presumably a part of King Henry's normal military baggage). It was most impressive; unfortunately I was not quite clear whether they were giving thanks that they were alive or that the others were dead. I finally concluded that they were expressing their united relief that we were half-way through the final act at last, and I sympathetically joined in. Meantime I noticed that Godfrey Tearle (who plays Henry) was doing most of the singing and doing it really well; thus adding to his distinctions of being the best speaker of English on the stage (he never hoots his vowels to show off his voice) and of helping to found Equity. Associated with him was Yvonne Arnaud, who had nothing to do and did it with the greatest distinction, and Hay Petrie, who timed his movements and gestures so well that Fluellen became a very funny character in spite of Shakespeare's text. I thought Mr. Sidney Bell's production perfect; the only things I missed were the band of the Grenadier Guards and squad-drill to music by the R.A.F.

Shakespeare himself appears in the second act of "Spring, 1600" at the Shaftesbury Theatre. He takes one look at the play and the audience, and bolts for an exit, never to return. Quite understandably; audiences in his time might have been interested in a woman dressing as a man (which was a cliché when Shakespeare used it and is the plot of this play), but it was very much beneath their dignity to laugh at a man dressing as a woman. Mr. Emlyn Williams apparently thought it so amusing that he relied on it for the sole comic relief in what he calls a comedy. For the rest, John Gielgud for the first time managed and produced. His second crowd scene was such a confusing, shouting, helter-skelter affair that I began to think the theatre had caught fire, and it was only when someone sat down decoratively on the O.P. side, and got himself trampled by enthusiastic supers, that I realised that all was safe. For disposition of people, for timing of lines, for building climaxes, for everything in the play that could not be hired from Motley's, I have never seen a worse produced play off the amateur stage. The one successful moment of the evening came when the first performance of "Twelfth Night" was shown beginning in the new Globe Theatre; but if Burbage spoke his lines as flatly as Ian Hunter did them at the Shaftesbury, I have no wonder that Shakespeare retired at a comparatively young age.

But the month was not all complaints. On the contrary, I have seen nothing in my experience of the theatre to compare for sheer brilliance of acting and polish of presentation, with Balliol Holloway's reproduction of Sheridan's "The Rivals." Whoever cut the text has the makings of a first-rate dramatist; the play bubbled and sparkled until the very last scene (which fell very flat). The thing, though advertised as a classic comedy, is more up to date than any play running in London, mainly because Sheridan wrote it about the things that were happening outside his own window; and we are not likely to produce plays of

SHAKESPEARE, SHERIDAN AND THE BALLET

by Aubrey Menon

Theatre watching "Peer Gynt" to the accompaniment of the sound of breaking glass and the attendant hulla-balloo of a mounted police charge. It all made Ibsen look very much beside the point. But Sheridan could draw a crowd in the middle of a revolution, because he was rude about a sort of person who existed then and who still exists, and would most probably be the prime cause of any revolution.

Herr Kurt Jooss, who invented the Ballets Jooss, would probably be decorated in the same revolution with the Order of the Red Banner (or the Blue Banner or the Heliotrope Banner—this article is not what the communists call agit-prop). His ballets deal most exclusively with contemporary things, such as war ("The Green Table"), or life in a city or diplomacy; and though what he has to say about these things is neither new nor very disturbing, he says it well and with the economy of a dramatist. In the programme he talks of dancing in the theatre as an "independent art"; it is just as well for Herr Kurt Jooss that it is nothing of the sort. Otherwise the electrician who did so splendidly for him (except for an irritating white

lime which ruined his ambers) might have independently lit the audience instead of the stage, in order to express his soul better; the pianists who actually did their best might have played nothing but "Three Blind Mice" all the evening for the same reason; and the costume designer who did quite creditably might have set everybody up in sheet tin because she liked the look of it. Actually the evening was as harmonious as Jooss's choreography: it was more. It was the most encouraging theatrical exhibition I have seen for years. Words and better acting (both can be combined with ballet) would have made the evening prophetic of the theatre-to-be.

(A number of expert opinions of the plan for a theatre put forward in last month's Brief Chronicle will be published in the April BOOKMAN.)

ESSEX; OVERBURY; COLONEL BLOOD. By C. L. Stainer. 5s. each. (Blackwell.)

Historical plays like "Richard of Bordeaux" and "St. Joan," written in ordinary everyday language, have encouraged the modern historical playwright to be much less conscientious about his history than he had to be in the days when any historical playwright worth his salt knew how to make his characters seem very different from living people as they exist to-day. One of the most useful devices for this purpose is adopted again by the reactionary Mr. Stainer, who in his play about Essex and Elizabeth has industriously translated even their most commonplace remarks into blank verse. The stiffness, pomposity and complete unreality of their speech makes them seem very "historical" indeed.

In his play on Overbury, Mr. Stainer writes some scenes in verse and others in prose, but still succeeds in keeping his characters dignifiedly remote from everyday life through judicious use of what used to be quite solemnly described as "historical English," a catholic collection of picturesque words and phrases garnered from three centuries and conveniently made to serve for any historical personage, regardless of the century to which they belonged. Note how easily and quickly the "historical atmosphere" is established by Lady Essex in the first two pages of "Overbury" through her judicious use in almost every sentence of phrases such as "ods precious," "foh," "i'faith," "s'death," "s'blood," "zounds," "forsooth," "prithee," "odso," and other equally quaint words. Unfortunately Mr. Stainer has again been so busy making his characters historical that he has forgotten to make them human.

More successful is "Colonel Blood," which tells the story of the attempt to steal the Crown jewels in language which is reasonably alive, but there is not enough plot or characterisation to make more than a good magazine story.

Norman Marshall

Brief Chronicles : Music

The events of the past month might suggest that we are on the edge of a Mahler vogue, to match the Sibelius vogue of the past two years. The Ninth Symphony was given by Dr. Boult and the B.B.C. Orchestra; Sir Thomas Beecham with the Philharmonic played the Fourth; and that superb bass singer, Alexander Kipnis, sang the *Kindertotenlieder*, thereby setting the standard by which all future London performances will have to be judged. One doubts nevertheless whether the vogue will materialise; it seems far more likely that coincidence rather than *élan vital* has been at work. Every conductor takes a turn at Mahler now and again, the critics hunt up the blandly disapproving notices they wrote twenty years back, and once more Mahler hides his face. I was unable to hear Beecham's performance of the Fourth Symphony; the organisation responsible for these Sunday concerts seems to issue tickets on the principle of *sauve qui peut*. But at the B.B.C. concert it was evident that Boult had put a tremendous amount of painstaking work in an attempt to secure a worthy and understanding performance of the Ninth. It was not a great performance; parts of it were not worthy; but there were flashes of genuine insight, and the whole was at least highly creditable and very much better than the usual Mahler performances of recent years. Dr. Boult showed enough understanding of the man to make one hope for further efforts in the same direction.

At this time of day it seems absurd to have to trot out all the common-sense refutations of the conventional adverse criticisms levelled at this music. Anyone with ears and a spark of genuine musicianship who heard this performance of the Ninth must have seen perfectly well, even if he disliked it, that the music has a quality of greatness and that the usual criticisms are ludicrously irrelevant. Really the only fundamental objection one could make to Mahler's work would be to its decadence, which is precisely the one never raised. One day, when Mahler is at last accepted as one of the world's great musical figures, this criticism will be offered and will have to be answered reasonably. It can be answered, though I shall not attempt to do so here; it would be crossing a bridge scarcely yet anticipated, much less come to. The usual criticisms are simply not criticisms at all, but fantastic red-herrings; the sort of red-herring that is so unscrupulously used to foul the edged and subtle trail of Berlioz. Mahler was imitative. Mahler was long-winded. Mahler was inchoate. And so on and so on. All catchwords to pigeon-hole the man and avoid the disturbing thought. The mind of the average music critic, in face of the unfamiliar, is the mind of the popular demagogue coining election slogans; and the critic has no excuse at all, for his seat is guaranteed.

Actually, as I have suggested, the main trouble about Mahler is his decadence. His was an over-civilised sensibility, and his music suffers as well as gains from the infinite nuancing of his impressions. But Mahler had more than sensibility; he had too a vital, untrammelled creative impulse, ruthless and naïve, which carried him through. It is this unique combination of decadent super-sensitiveness and naïve impulse to state boldly and unambiguously, which is at once the strength and the weakness of his music. And the weakness, if regarded from this angle, is seen not to be weakness at all. It does not spring from a faulty technique, from an absence of this quality or that, but from a super-abundance of gifts imperfectly fused. Mahler's mind, more than the mind of any other composer, was a battle-field. His symphonies

MAHLER AND MOZART

are dispatches from the line. The spirit of Mozart is strong

and striding; the music conceived in it takes easily an obvious form. And it is the same with the spirit of Delius which, if the phrase is legitimate, may be called straightforwardly complex. But the complexity offered us by Mahler is absolute.

This month too we have had some splendid hours with another neglected composer, W. A. Mozart. His name is far better known than Mahler's, and everybody will tell you that he was either the greatest or one of the greatest composers of history. Yet despite ceaseless assurances of loyalty from all self-respecting concert-goers, they contrive to get through life hearing very little of his work. Bruno Walter gave us an excellent performance of the G minor Symphony on the B.B.C. orchestra, but most of our thanks are due to Schnabel. First, with the Pro Arte Quartet, he played the G minor Quartet Piano in a programme which included the Brahms F. minor Quintet and Dvorak's A major Quintet, and then, with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Julius Harrison, three piano concertos—the familiar D minor, the less

by Edward Crankshaw

familiar B flat with the heavenly larghetto and the virtually unknown C major. There were critics who complained about too much Mozart, though why, if one can sit through six hours of "Götterdämmerung," it should be beyond human endurance to survive two hours of Mozart, it is difficult to understand. And the piano concertos too. Not three familiar works all in one evening; not the "Jupiter," the "Haffner" and the "Prague"—though personally I should have said nothing against that with a Toscanini or a Beecham in charge—but three concertos which, outside the Proms., one rarely has a chance of hearing. The C major concerto, heard by me for the first time, is one blaze of glory from beginning to end. It has all the splendour of the day; the mood is one of glittering radiance; the music cuts across the dulled consciousness as sunlight dissolves mountain mist. But like the day, one knows always that it sprung from darkness and must return to it. Of Schnabel's playing I will speak next time. At the time of writing he has still to play the two Brahms concertos—one with Beecham, the other with Boult.

New music of the month has included a Fifth Piano Concerto by Prokofiev, which was introduced by the composer and Bruno Walter at a B.B.C. Concert—very amusing, skilful and witty and quite pleasant to hear, but—*démodé* perhaps; which in music of this kind is an important consideration. Then we had Bax's Fifth Symphony, which seems to me (as a rule unsympathetic to Celtic twilight) definitely his best work to date, with considerably more grip than is usually manifest. Among instrumentalists there has been a violinist new to England, Georg Kuhlenskampf, who together with Beecham gave a superb performance of the Brahms Concerto and showed himself to be a front rank player, remarkable for subtlety of phrasing and flawless intonation. Among pianists an Englishman, Mr. Clifford Curzon, gave a recital at the Wigmore Hall which included the B flat Sonata of Schubert, excellently played. Mr. Curzon has a beautiful fluency of line and phrasing and an unusually good left hand. In passages which are fast and loud he has a tendency to peck at the keys, but at least he always hits them unambiguously and without slovenly slurring. Apart from this his technique seems to be excellent, and he shows sensitive musicianship into the bargain. The Schubert, which nobody but a genuine musician can hold together, he did very well indeed, the only serious flaw being a tendency to go wool-gathering in the more sustained passages.

Brief Chronicles : Art

Watercolours by
Christopher Wood.
(Lefevre Galleries.)

Paintings by Francis
Butterfield. (Zwem-
mer Gallery.)

CHRISTOPHER WOOD AND FRANCIS BUTTERFIELD

In writing of Christopher Wood one needs, if ever, to know where exactly to place one's hyperbole. There are qualities in Wood the total of which entices one so immediately that criticism is likely to be defeated by praise. Wood, who killed himself five years ago when he was still less than thirty, painted chiefly what I should name "landscape situations." He painted them. He felt in constructions of colour; and much of his work is uncommonly dramatic by uncommon means. He places line dramatically against line and mass. Trees, persons, cows, houses, boats, sea, cloud, the ace of spades or the three of hearts—everything that came to his eye he thrust dramatically within the rectangle of canvas; but he always thrust it there in paint. He invented delicious harmonies of colour; and in his best work his colours are never shallow or common. Every tone, whether dark or light, delicate or strong, is created with the fullness of its nature; and since Wood must have been uncommonly intelligent and uncommonly sensitive, it is evident that he was well supplied as an artist. He was not a giant. He was not great as the word should be used; but he was witty, dramatic, emotional, and could be so at one time. "Windy Day: Monte Carlo," in this exhibition of his water-colours, proves this very well in its colour—those dark, active sea tones which he used so well, deep blue and green, coupled with witty, dramatic design and the placing of each figure.

Other water-colours, such as "Country House," "Rome No. 2," "House of Raphael" and, above the rest, "Hotel des Princes No. 2" (in which every slight pencil turn is emotive, every patch of colour important), testify thoroughly to the completeness of Wood's art. It is charming, and charm is perhaps the one check on its variety and the one criticism. Sometimes (though he knew their limits) he depended too much upon wit and drama; sometimes he was too pretty. Sometimes (and for these times we must always remember him warmly and with thankfulness), he possessed what he saw completely, and recorded it in terms of Christopher Wood so exactly that our experience suddenly grows larger and more happy. He could do this best in oil; but he could do it also in water-colour; and since water-colour is the

most deceptively difficult of media, one's belief in his excellence is refined.

Walking at once from Wood to Butterfield is

like walking from Titian to Poussin, from Bonington to Cotman. I use these names with care only to suggest a difference in attitude, not a difference in stature, for Wood had learnt far more than Mr. Butterfield has had the chance to learn about painting and the right use of his own powers. He had explored himself, I feel, thoroughly, whereas Mr. Butterfield is now beginning to cut into his own jungle. He was born in Bradford in 1905. He turned from wool-stapling to paint, and he knows nothing of contemporary painting beyond reproductions in black-and-white. His painting now appears to me masculine, inven-

tive and uncertain. He has experienced landscape best of all. "Bather: Wharfedale" reveals his full present capability, his power to turn realistic facts into imaginative facts, to invent painter's shapes between the real shape and the ideal shape; his power to compose flatly in plane and line; his skill in combining unusual tones (particularly of yellow, green and pink) into unusual combinations.



"Sanctuary" by Christopher Wood
By permission of Alex. Reid & Lefevre, Ltd.

He can simplify trees and the human body into new emotive forms which are most useful pictorially. So far, in my view, he has done best in such landscape pictures as "Bather: Wharfedale," "Covenanter's Steps: Ayrshire," "Farm: Montgomerie" and "Seascape with Two Figures"; the last, like the first, an oil in which unfamiliar colours are employed with unusual excitement. He seems less experienced in his figure simplifications, and in a picture or two there are small areas in which the design breaks up into muddle. Mr. Butterfield deserves criticism, since he deserved admiration. He strikes me as an intelligent painter, sufficiently strong to take much from other work without being over-impressed by it. He can draw, he can force paint obediently into pattern, into unusual harmony, with an admirable variety of textures. He is not in danger of being too charming; and since prophecies are foolish (and malicious also in the way they boomerang), I will not insult Mr. Butterfield by patronisingly foretelling his future. He has achieved much. Very much he can obviously learn. I hope and suspect that his jungle is full of most excellent timber.

by
Geoffrey Grigson

Brief Chronicles : Broadcasting

That the B.B.C. is well aware of the preparations being made, in certain quarters, against the day when its Charter expires, is evident in *The Listener's* gesture, on January 31st, of a supplement of twelve pages devoted to an outline of the history, constitution and policy of the Corporation. It is just as well that the public should thus be enabled to fill in the usually hazy outline that most people possess concerning the whys and wherefores of the B.B.C. I therefore commend the Corporation for its astuteness in publishing such a supplement, but I am afraid I cannot commend it for the rather complacent (and even ingenuous) terms in which the greater part of that supplement is couched. "Here," the supplement seems to say, "are the facts. Though why on earth it should be necessary to place those facts in front of you is beyond our comprehension. Really of course our methods are not your concern—even if they are not (as we suspect) beyond your understanding; but since so much nonsense is being spoken about us, here is the final truth. Read it—and then keep quiet."

I expect I exaggerate here. If so, it is because I firmly believe that this dictatorial complacency which colours so considerable a part of the B.B.C.'s activities is one of the greatest barriers between it and the public it serves. There is really no excuse for it. It is evident in the B.B.C.'s pronouncements; it is undoubtedly the cause of the unnecessary secrecy in which the B.B.C. continually cloaks itself; it is even to be heard in the very inflection of the announcers' voices.

And why? I can find no reason why. The achievements of the B.B.C. are sufficiently commendable on the whole to warrant, one would have supposed, a more friendly and open attitude towards the public. And it must be remembered that the offence is all the more palpable because it is still within the average listener's memory when "the personal note" coloured everything that was put out on the air. Now things have swung to the exact opposite: if the relations between the B.B.C. and its public were once too personal they are now far too impersonal.

But to return to the B.B.C.'s recent public statement of its exact position. The precise cause of the criticism which has made this statement necessary is the fact that in 1936 the B.B.C.'s Charter expires. It is well known that there is a not uninfluential organisation afloat the intention of which is to replace, if possible, the present system of broadcasting in this country by a system of competitive broadcasting such as prevails in America and some other countries. This organisation is actively preparing itself for the moment when the B.B.C.'s Charter comes to be overhauled; my only hope is that the B.B.C. is being every bit as active in its defence.

Or is it possible that it feels itself above any such necessity? I sincerely hope not; because, much as I deplore the possibilities of a competitive system of broadcasting in this country, I have no doubt whatever that those possibilities are very real. Neither complacency nor aloofness will stand the B.B.C. in any stead when the day of reckoning comes; and if, from its rather idealistic perch, it does not quickly realise that justice in this world is not always given where it is deserved, before we know where we are we shall find ourselves, as listeners, fed with a broadcast service further removed from our best desires than anything now supplied by the B.B.C.

I see the advantages of a competitive system. It would supply us with more frankly "popular" programmes. Obviously advertisers are not going to buy the air at huge figures in order to fill it with programmes which have only a limited appeal. Those of us who happen to have a taste for music above the range of jazz will have to look elsewhere for it. There will be no such thing any more as the elaborate system of educational talks which are now broadcast. And broadcasting will have to say good-bye to experiment—no mean handicap

THE B.B.C. AND ITS RIVALS

by C. Henry Warren

surely in a form of entertainment so young. But after all the majority of listeners want popular programmes, and I suppose they are quite justified to-day in com-

plaining that they do not get the service they deserve.

But I am not sure that they will get it, either, under a competitive system. These active adversaries of the B.B.C. are busy dangling under the noses of "ordinary" listeners a blessed day when all the faults for which we abuse the B.B.C. shall be no more. In that day (they declare) there will be for instance no ban on free speech and on controversial broadcasts as now. I wonder. Let me in this connection quote a recent comment by Mr. William Cruikshank. "Why," he asks, "should free speech and controversy be any more an adjunct of the competitive system than of the monopoly system? What of the privately owned newspapers? Are they to be offered as shining examples of integrity to the B.B.C.? There is plenty of controversial matter in the press, but how much truth? There is little controversial matter in the B.B.C. programmes at the moment; there must obviously be more; but on the whole the B.B.C., if it does not tell the whole truth, at least tells the truth and nothing but the truth. Can as much be said of the

penny papers?" Perhaps Mr. Cruikshank is even a little too generous to the B.B.C.; but essentially I think there is no gainsaying the rightness of his contention.

I firmly believe that if competitive broadcasting is introduced over here the number of listeners will be decreased by half. The proportion of listeners in this country is as great as it is simply because there is something in the present programmes for the highbrow as well as for the lowbrow, for the educated listeners as well as for the uneducated listener. That it is so is entirely to the credit of the policy adopted from the very beginning by Sir John Reith and maintained by him in the face of all criticism. He has done his utmost to prove that intelligent listening is possible in this country—and, not only possible, but preferred. I am not prepared to argue that he has succeeded in proving his point; but I am prepared to argue that, in his endeavour, he has created an audience for broadcasting as nearly intelligent as any broadcast audience can be. Is all this splendid pioneer work then to be swept away at the short-sighted behest of men whose real wish, when all is said, is not so much to please the public as to turn broadcasting into a commercial enterprise from which they may benefit? These men see with envy the millions of dollars that competitive broadcasting has put into the pockets of a number of Americans; and they view Britain as a similar source of income for themselves. That is really all there is about it. This talk about pleasing the public, about better and more popular programmes, about free speech on the air at last, is the merest eye-wash. But that does not make it any the less dangerous or any the less worthy the active antagonism of all who take broadcasting seriously.

It would therefore be a thousand pities if the B.B.C., entrenched in a self-opinionated righteousness, should scorn to put forward its utmost endeavour to defeat these specious adversaries. The supplement in *The Listener* was a step in the right direction—though not a very graceful step nor apparently a very willing one. I feel convinced that if only the B.B.C. could persuade itself to come off its perch a little and sincerely and frankly take the public into its confidence in this matter it would have no occasion to fear the loss of its Charter. I do not think it fears this now—but that is the trouble: it is too sure of itself. The public is easily gulled, and a really extensive campaign on the part of the advocates of commercial broadcasting would very likely turn the tables in their favour. Then why does the B.B.C. not set to work and plan an equally extensive campaign? Its adversaries must perforce work by more or less "subterranean" means; but the B.B.C. has all the air for all the hours of the day at its disposal.

VERSE

DEATH IN THE MOUNTAINS

To have found a sheer death in the hanging ravine
Between the white challengers and the exalting air,
An eternal poise at the apex, is to have been
Beyond time's purlicious altogether; and there
Like meteors in August falling through the golden
Vaudeville of the starways, to have turned
With the old mountain fierceness to re-create
A falcon attitude out of our urban sleep.

It is not the dead return, haunting the bridges
And taking shape from cobwebs and old dust:
Rather to us their living thought that hardly
Descended into these dim necessitous lowlands,
But all day ranging the dreamed snow, was waiting
The ultimate ordeal, the monster-guarded
Treasure beyond the inaccessible ridge:
Their debt foreclosed, and naked strangely departing.

Randall Swingler

ENGLAND EXPECTS

Do you expect
to-morrow will be different,
that we shall go
clean shod into the hills?
I dare not speak of spring
the flush full days
myself averse
to the blood's rising flame
that will soon fail,
cracked, stupid in the solstice.
Do you expect
turbines, or burdened clouds
pricked by your steeples,
to release you fire?

You, men and women,
careful of your blood,
unwilling to allow
strange temperature,
no nearer heaven
in the rarer air
nor yet exerted
by a vigorous soil,
loving you'll find the day desirable,
loving you'll look and see the stars o'night,
living you'll switch the engines to achieve,
calmed by beginning oily click of belts,
you'll speak of God as a known quantity,
the much admired alloy, the bathing-pool,
the road-house in the hills.

Do you expect
a finer difference
shoulder to shoulder
claim a livelier blood?
You are in love with God,
to-morrow's man.

You've slept the colder
nights in your own warmth.
Are you expectant
that your joy conceived:
or in a frolic love
you mated air,
fluttered your tinsel
in the silent nave
and tiptoed from the church?

John Pudney

THEY SPOKE OF A NEW CITY

And they spoke of a new city, a new order
And as it were a new race of men who
Shared all one with another and thought
The same thoughts, to live there where
There was a new architecture which meant
Clean buildings light and ribbed strongly with
Steel, for theirs was the steel age, the age
Of machines (day and night throbbing and
Electricity always burning). One could
Imagine the muscular bare arms of the men
Moving like pistons, and the strange lights and
The streets and the marching, the plain food,
The stone vistas. One could imagine it all
Clear as a film when they spoke of
Revolution and the proletariat and of
Russia. To them the words of Lenin were
More beautiful than any poem. And they had
An incorrigible dialectic to bind together their
Images of flags and tools and workers' unions. But
It seemed that this new city they spoke of
(Using an image) was to them only an
Utopia, or an escape for their minds from the
Dirty fly-blown offices where they worked,
The grey towns and the hard set faces
Of their ordinary neighbours, from the hard
Times and the narrow ways, because it was
Sordid to them to be working for only
Wages.

These young have the power though, driven
By desperation and disgust, to carve upon the
Future that lies like an untouched jewel before them,
As a triumphant insignia marking the commencement
Of an epoch, the realisation of their dream.

David Gascoyne

THIS MACHINE AGE

Cinema at last invades my sacred moments,
Now your face drifts, isolated, screen-projected;
Silkful strings sing softly when you bat your eyelids,
Thoughts are gangsters shod with skis who cross the
mountains
To break the law, the mysteries.

Oswell Blakeston

"The Song of the Shirt"

I have read with great interest the leading article, "Outworkers Wanted," in the current number of THE BOOKMAN, and await with some eagerness the publication of the further instalment.

It may interest your readers to know of the activities of the Home Workers' Aid Association, which was started by the late Mr. Thomas Holmes for the purpose of assisting the women homeworkers of London. We have for many years endeavoured to lighten the burden of these women, and seek to help them in many ways. Membership is open to all women who work in their own homes at some recognised trade for a firm, and who are wholly or mainly dependent on their earnings; and in return for a membership fee of one penny per week they are entitled to a fortnight's free holiday in the summer at our Home of Rest at Walton-on-the-Naze. By means of frequent and regular visiting we keep in touch with them throughout the year, and are able to render them temporary assistance in times of stress.

I am in complete agreement with the statements that "the outworker is markedly affected by seasonal fluctuation," and "the rates of pay for these people are frequently amazingly low." One of our members, who is a toothbrush drawer, told me on Wednesday that she was paid 7d. per dozen for the best bristle toothbrushes, of which she can only make eleven in one hour working at top speed, while for nail-brushes, which had six rows of bristle, she was paid 1s. 9d. per dozen and could only make three per hour. I also visited recently two sisters who were making ornamental silk tassels, who said that when both were working steadily all day until 9.30 or 10 p.m. they could only earn 3s. between them, and this represented something like two gross of completed work.

The late Mr. W. Pett Ridge was for many years our vice-chairman, and the Association is at the moment anxious to extend the scope of its work, but is prevented from doing so by lack of funds.

12, Bedford Road,
South Tottenham, N.15.

N. G. PRICE

"The Song of the Shirt"

This problem of sweated and underpaid labour has been a matter of continual consideration for as long as this country has been a country. There have always been underlings who have been badly paid; there always will be.

We shall get very little more forward unless we do the one thing our reformers are so very reluctant to do.

Miss Mary Edmonds is said to have given much time to her investigations in connection with the making of various garments, and she mentions instances connected with firms who are obviously trading on this sweating system.

All this is very good indeed; but quite useless.

If and when our magazines and writers will come out into the open and give the names of the firms or people who are the villains in this matter, there will be less of the villainy—much less. It is useless to fight in a kind of "safety first" state of mind. The coward's castle of generality merely means that the evil continues to flourish; it proves to the villains they are safe.

London.

ELLIOTT STONE

A Relief Suggestion

May I call attention to the number of derelicts, of which there are thousands in the country, who have been in the employment of one firm for twenty-five years or over, and have been dismissed on account of age. Their only alternative, when they have used up the dole, is to seek relief. In my opinion this is hardly fair on ratepayers who have to contribute to their salvation.

COMMENTS AND

From Readers of

I suggest that each firm should pay part at least of all that is granted by the Public Assistance Committee to their own cast-offs. In my own case, I commenced work for a large firm when I was seventeen and was dismissed when fifty-three. What chance have I of getting another job? I have been out of work seven years, have exhausted all my savings, and am now drawing my first week's relief—nine shillings per week.

Erdington, Birmingham.

DAVID WOODHOUSE

Curious Coincidence

It was astonishing one morning to open one's newspaper and find there two columns side by side, one dealing with this country's efforts and hopes for international agreement, the other dealing with this country's reprisals against its neighbour's tariff quotas. The two statements were issued on the same day by this country's Government. Were these two items of news set on purpose side by side on the main news page of one of our leading papers? Did the unreconcilable nature of these two statements never intrude itself into the mind of any of His Majesty's ministers?

7, Heathville Road,
Crouch Hill, London, N.19.

W. HUGH C. MORETON

An Eastern View of the Englishman

I read with great interest Mr. D. G. Hutton's "Perfidious Albion," but I think he has not mentioned many of the reasons "for the foreigner's misunderstanding" of the English character. In the East, for instance, an Englishman is an enigma. I have found an average Englishman in England courteous though reserved, ready to exchange ideas but slow to recognise the significance of new ones. There is a strange self-sufficiency about him which is annoying to me. But in India an Englishman is altogether a different being. He may be a successful ruler, but he is not great as a man there.

England has helped India to become modern; her literature and arts have given a new life to our artistic talents, and there has been in recent years a great renaissance in our plastic arts, music and literature; but the Englishman in India has failed to realise the significance of our national aspirations. An Englishman's genius for "dealing with a situation as it arises" has been the cause of his failure in India, for you cannot deal with most cherished ideals of a great nation as a "situation." In fact it is a new life that has sprung up, but an Englishman thinks that it is a political situation which he must control and manipulate to his own advantage.

When the Englishman imprisons two thousand educated young men in Bengal without trial for an indefinite period of time; when he, in the true fascist manner, imprisons all the leaders of the great Congress Party and confiscates its funds and property, and flogs political prisoners in jails (according to the Secretary of State for India five hundred were flogged last year), we sincerely begin to doubt the Englishman's genius for "tolerance and practical improvisation."

Lord Willingdon to-day wields more absolute power than Hitler or Mussolini. The Englishman (except the missionary) to us is neither Christian nor human; to us he is the product of a system which is as cruel as it is out of date, and he has achieved success at the cost of his finer qualities of tolerance, sympathy and understanding, which he does not practise in India.

5, Buccleugh Place,
Edinburgh.

I. HUSAIN

CORRESPONDENCE

"The Bookman"

The Cavell Case

Owing to a recent sensational revival of interest in the story of Nurse Cavell, one visualises thousands of the credulous confirming their false impressions, instead of using the free library. This latest exhibition in mud-slinging so much resembles another jingoistic attempt to call "Cain!" that, with our tragically belated knowledge of what armament agents can do in this devilish direction, we would do well to remember Nurse Cavell was executed for confessed participation in the repatriation of wounded allied soldiers, and was therefore as dangerous to Germany as Sir Roger Casement was to us. We shot Casement for gun-running, the Germans shot Nurse Cavell for returning us our cannon fodder; and as far as mutual lunacy can be justified, we were both right.

Great patriot though Nurse Cavell was, she was confessedly misguided, for repatriation invariably meant the return of the repatriated to the various fields of murder; and in common justice to Germany and our dope-deluded illiterates, her splendid recantation ("I realise that patriotism is not enough") should be kept perpetually in the forefront of any literature on the subject.

London, N.W.6.

W. A. RATHKEY

Demosthenes or Calvin Coolidge?

The eyes of the world are witnessing dramatic preparations for European war on a scale hitherto unprecedented.

Selfishness is a safeguard of national survival, but reciprocity is a vital fundamental of world existence in the ordered state; but a state of defence is a dangerous adjunct to provocation, and opinion is divided as to whether the act of arming does not equivocate to being in a state of war. Demosthenes, in a rousing address to Athenians when Philip was advancing on Thrace, declared in the Third Philippic: "Whoever contrives and prepares the means for a conquest is at war with me already before he darts or draws the bow."

On the other hand, the late Calvin Coolidge told America "to be ready for defence is not to be guilty of aggression. We can have military preparation without assuming a military spirit."

Will future events justify the Coolidge theory?

Guernsey, C.I.

MAY E. E. BARROW

The Codex Sinaiticus

The appeal from the Archbishop of Canterbury for help in raising money for the Codex reopens this controversial subject. Are we justified in spending this vast sum on the Codex—admittedly one of the world's greatest treasures, but one which is really appreciated only by a few scholars—when thousands of our people are badly housed and starving?

What are our motives in buying the Codex? Is it merely the desire to hoard a treasure, and prevent another nation from acquiring it? Not a healthy international outlook for a people when peace is threatened on all sides.

It is argued that many feel a desire to possess a document from which our Bible is derived, and the crowds who have besieged the British Museum show the appreciation of the public. Is this so? One remembers the crowds who came to see the lovely Luttrell Psalter—now only appreciated by a scholarly few.

Again, the history of the acquisition of the Codex by Tischendorf is not as clear as Great Britain as the purchaser would wish. His story is obscure, and it is not reassuring to hear Nietzsche's estimate of him as "a man cunning . . . and greedy of gain."

"Old Meadows,"

Deganwy, North Wales.

MARY E. WILLIAMS

T. S. Eliot and Burns

In the recently published volume of Lectures delivered to American Students in Harvard University, T. S. Eliot makes the following statement: "In relation to English literature, Burns was a decadent representative of the great alien tradition." I have been accustomed to regard Mr. Eliot as a sane and reliable literary critic, but in making this statement he seems to have departed from both sanity and truth.

Burns's work has always been regarded as an inseparable part of the tradition of the old Makars and the other numerous poets who composed the homely songs and stirring ballads whose form and diction Burns largely used and improved in his poems and songs, which appeal to all lovers of dialect productions. Is this decadence?

In his poems and songs Burns uses language more akin to the dialect used by Scottish folk than that used by Dunbar. Is this a sign of decadence?

Has Mr. Eliot any notion of the effect wrought upon the people of Scotland by the yearly homage paid to Burns and his works round about January 25th? Apart from some possible mistaken hero-worship, I have a strong suspicion that such recurrent and continuous worship would never be given by Scotsmen to a *decadent*.

Well might William Jeffrey, the well-known Scottish poet and critic, exclaim regarding this pronouncement made by Mr. Eliot—"A rousing whid!"

25, Dalmary Drive,
Paisley.

JOHN PURDIE

Fair Play for the Theatre

There is much to be said for the campaign against the Entertainments Duty, now being waged by the Stage and Allied Arts Defence League.

This tax, first imposed eighteen years ago, operates in an absurd way. Being a tax on turnover it must be paid, even if a theatre is running at a loss. This is not usually realised by the man in the street who, when he reads "plus tax," naturally assumes that he is paying the extra.

Sir John Martin-Harvey instances a case of a theatre which made a loss of £2,061 on the year but paid £6,264 tax.

Since its imposition the number of British theatres has been reduced by more than half, and touring companies from one hundred and eighty-four in 1932 to thirty-seven in 1933.

The question, what is to become of the drama and dramatic art unless this impost, which amounts to one-sixth of the theatres' takings, is removed, should be a matter for serious thought for all lovers of art.

16, Sandringham Avenue,
Meols, Wirral, Cheshire.

W. J. WELLS

Autobiography

The publication of "Why Not?", by Viola Bankes, has raised the question whether such autobiographies, mainly in the form of reminiscences of famous people, should be printed. Apart from their highly controversial matter, such books must be considered as purely literary propositions, when their comparatively small merit will be realised.

Professor Saintsbury once said that imagination is the soul of literature, and we may judge any book by its power of stimulating the imagination. A dull book has no such appeal, we have difficulty in fixing the attention, but these memoirs are by no means dull. Their fault is that they take a short cut to the imagination by dealing with well-known figures. An ephemeral success awaits them, to be followed by complete oblivion. Limited in scope, in a short time their contents are no longer familiar and, failing to capture the essential spirit of any decade, are left colourless.

Unable to transcend the medium of autobiography, these reminiscences cannot recall the glories of a past age. They will not achieve that distinction which needs more than a gallery of portraits to produce; upon their authors the mantle of St. Simon and of other great memoir-writers will not fall.

36, Carlyle Road,
Edgbaston, Birmingham 16.

L. W. HERNE

Biography

TWO POLITICIANS

by Hugh Kingsmill

Four and a Half Years.

By the Right Hon. Christopher Addison. In 2 vols. Volume I. 18s. (Hutchinson.)

T. P. O'Connor.

By Hamilton Fyfe. 16s. (Allen & Unwin.)

The first volume of Dr. Addison's War diary covers the period between June, 1914, and Lloyd George's accession to the premiership in December, 1916. Most of the book is occupied with the creation of the Ministry of Munitions by Lloyd George, who found in Dr. Addison one of his most capable supporters. There is a vast amount of information in these pages, and the author is so matter-of-fact and so little concerned with himself and the picturesque and dramatic aspects of his situation that the future historian of the Great War will probably find this record more to his purpose than the less impersonal



T. P. O'Connor at the age of 80

From "T. P. O'Connor," by Hamilton Fyfe (Allen & Unwin)

records of more famous actors on the home stage. But to the ordinary reader the book will be rather heavy going. Even at its most exciting moment, when Lloyd George is shown picking out the members of the Government which was to replace Asquith's, there are far too many sentences of this kind: "On Tuesday, however, after lunch, Lever stopped me and told me that Duckham, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, told him that there had been a discussion between Montagu's secretary and himself as to the usefulness of the Advisory Committee sending a letter, both to L. G. and Asquith, to the effect that, whichever of them was Prime Minister, Montagu must be retained as Minister of Munitions." This kind of writing makes it hard for the reader to appreciate to the full the comedy of Montagu's attempts to transfer his services to Lloyd George without blemishing his loyalty to Asquith, a comedy which reached its highest point when he unbosomed himself of his perplexities to Dr. Addison, who a few days later solved the problem by taking over the Ministry of Munitions himself.

The handicap of Dr. Addison's style will not prevent a patient reader from learning some of the reasons which gave Lloyd George the victory in his duel with Asquith. Lloyd George cared about nothing but his political career, whereas Asquith had a repressed passion for society which absorbed most of his emotional force, leaving him only a sluggish shrewdness for the conduct of the War and the even more arduous task of keeping Lloyd George in order. Asquith, Dr. Addison notes, selected men for office "for all sorts of social and similar reasons." Lloyd

George was completely indifferent to society, and allowed everyone of importance to his plans to know of his indifference. When, to give one example, he was appointed Prime Minister, he greatly impressed Dr. Addison by returning straight from the king to the War Office, and having a frugal repast with Dr. Addison. "I shall always remember that first Ministerial dinner," writes Dr. Addison. "It was as clear an indication as one could have how untouched he is by what may be called 'society' considerations." Soup, a little fish, boiled chicken and ham, made up the simple meal, and Dr. Addison rose from it feeling that the War was as good as won.

T. P. O'Connor, the subject of Mr. Hamilton Fyfe's most readable biography, used to say that he was a failure, and had not done in life what he had hoped to in his youth. His ambition was to be a great writer, but he did not succeed in being more than a great journalist. "His wings," Mr. Fyfe says, "seemed to be better suited to short flights than to long ones." That there was a good deal of the poet in him appears from his account of his early days in the west of Ireland. The meadows by the Shannon seemed to him in his childhood, he says, to be "lying under a brilliant light . . . places where one drank deep draughts of the joy of life. . . . Somehow one felt upon the waters of the Shannon that large sense of liberation from the ordinary things of life which to youth, still opulent in hopes and dreams, is always a delight." But his impressionability was quick not profound, these early years affected him sentimentally when he looked back to them in later life, but they did not shape his imagination or recall him from the politics and journalism of London to his first home. More than sixty of his eighty-one years were spent in London, but London, too, did not really affect him deeply. Had he forgotten Ireland in London, he might have found material for the writing which was his secret ambition, but his roots never went far

into any soil, and he cherished a not very exhausting affection for the political and general welfare of his native land till the day of his death. At one time he was one of Parnell's chief colleagues in the fight for Home Rule, but the fiercer members of the party always looked on him with contempt as an Anglicised Irishman, more anxious to stand well with the Liberals than to free Ireland. Mr. Fyfe's very clear and impartial account of T. P.'s relations with Parnell, Healy and Biggar leaves no doubt of the attitude of these grim fighters to their conciliatory colleague. It was characteristic of T. P. that when Parnell was cited as co-respondent by O'Shea, T. P. first insisted that the party must stand by Parnell, then agreed that the party could not stand by Parnell, and after speaking in Ireland as an anti-Parnellite was surprised when Parnell snubbed him during a chance encounter.

With this quick, pliable temperament he was perfectly equipped to be a great popular journalist, and it was in journalism that his best work was done. His place in the history of the newspaper, Mr. Fyfe writes, is fixed. He was the first, during his editorship of the *Star*, to lift the daily paper out of its nineteenth century dullness; and in *M.A.P.* and other weeklies he introduced the human interest with a brilliant mixture of tact and vigour. In his last years, as the Father of the House of Commons, he enjoyed that universal popularity which is accorded to those who are no longer competing for the prizes of life. "He has died," Ramsay MacDonald said of him, "without, I believe, a single hostile thought regarding him in any person's mind."

A TRAGIC INTERMEDIATE

Heinrich Heine : A Life Between Past and Future.
By Ludwig Marcuse. Translated from the German by L. Marie Sieveking and Ian F. D. Morrow. 2s. 6d. (Sidgwick & Jackson.)

There are two sentences which occur toward the end of Ludwig Marcuse's *Life of Heine* which will suggest more briefly and clearly perhaps than any others its keynote. In the first of them he writes that Heine "really embodied, as it were, 'the decay of romanticism'"; in the second that he "always stood between the parties." We do not however mean that this book has been built up to illustrate a thesis. Herr Marcuse is critical of neat explanations, which a shallow mind is always ready to accept because it likes to see order of any kind imposed upon a chaos of unconnected data. There are some lives perhaps in which everything can be made to fit in nicely. But Heine's was emphatically not that kind of life. It cannot even be described as an organic growth, "a gradual development from seed to blossom"; for it was essentially disorganic and as such was never really immature or mature. But there is a design in the disorganic as in the organic, if we can divine it. Inevitably it is a pattern of conflict, of inward contradiction, and Heine's life displays this pattern, as Herr Marcuse shows, with an unusually diverse consistency. To cite only the more obvious antagonisms which were his fate—he was by birth both German and Jew; he became by adoption French. He



From the portrait by] Heinrich Heine [F. B. Wrietz
From "*Heinrich Heine*," by Ludwig Marcuse (Sidgwick & Jackson)

had a purely poetic nature and was born into a society whose interests were purely political and an era of tension and uncertainty. As an idealist he was on the side of 'the people,' but as an artist, thinker and fine flower of bourgeois culture he recoiled from the crude excesses and "frenzy for equality" of the radicals. He was a pagan who knew at heart and lived to admit that it was to drown the dissonance of his own being that he so passionately hymned the harmony of existence. Yet he never discovered any other harmony to live or die by. As Herr Marcuse remarks, "Belief in Heine's conversion was a mistake on the part of his contemporaries which the brilliant Heine encouraged by brilliant sayings. Even during the years when he lay dying Heine remained what he had always been—a tragic intermediate?"

Hugh I'A. Fausset

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Prince Eugène: Twin Marshal with Marlborough.

By Lieut.-General Sir George MacMunn. 10s. 6d. (Sampson Low.)

Men will always love the story of Cinderella, the story of the oppressed gaining power and defeating the oppressor. It is the favourite dream of nine-tenths of humanity: the clerk dreams of insulting his boss, the servant girl longs for the day when she can break a flower vase safely over the head of her mistress. No story will ever be so popular as the story of Cinderella, and almost every second film one sees is built upon this theme. Therefore a biography of Prince Eugène should prove enormously popular, for Eugène lived completely a Cinderella life. As a child he was weak, almost a cripple, and frightfully ugly; he was insulted grossly by that great king, Louis XIV, but he kept on doggedly until he defeated again and again that same king. Beginning as a penniless abbé, too despised even to be given an abbacy, he ended with innumerable titles as the builder of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the conqueror of France. After all, Cinderella only achieved her dream by the accident of having the smallest foot in the kingdom; Eugène achieved his by magnificent courage and by unfaltering belief in himself. His story is one of the most inspiring in history, and I defy anybody to read Herr Frischauer's book without being thrilled as no novel could thrill him.

Eugène was the grand-nephew of Mazarin, and from Mazarin he inherited a balanced knowledge of world affairs and the subtlest diplomacies; actually he wrecked all that Mazarin fought for. Besides this great political sense, he was also a gallant and a clever general. It is difficult to find words with which to praise his achievement; I only know that the story of his life inspires me as very little else in history can inspire me. In every way Eugène was great—as a diplomatist, a soldier and a scholar.

It has been suggested, with much probability, that he was the son of Louis XIV. His mother, the charming and intelligent Olympia, was Louis's mistress, and was eventually banished from France because she became involved in the disgrace of the poisoner La Voisin, Olympia having consulted the creature about a love potion with which she hoped to regain Louis's affection. This however was probably only an excuse, as Louis seems to have had the habit of exiling his mistresses when they bored him. Those who disagree with this theory of Eugène's parentage argue that as he had nothing to do with women—except late in life his love of Countess Batthyány—he could scarcely be the son of Louis who was the most notorious rake of his age. They forget that, although he was not a woman-lover, Eugène was not sexless; his

sex was merely a deviation from what is called the "normal."

In so short a space as this it would be useless to try to recount Eugène's life. It was a life of action, of battle after battle, conquest after conquest. Only against one soldier did he show the slightest sign of weakness—that was against his cousin Vendôme. He was destroyed by the memory of his childhood, by the memory of his wretched youth when he was malformed and despised while Vendôme was beautiful and loved. The phantoms of youth rose before him and robbed him of his courage. Against any other general however he was unbeatable; against armies twice his size, against the hordes of Turkey, he led his small but gallant troops, and he never failed. That alone is

achievement enough, but when one remembers that he was not only a great collector of books, but that he actually read the books, and that he was one of the cleverest diplomatists of his day, one's admiration for the little abbé who became a prince is literally inexpressible.

His life was dominated by a hatred of Louis XIV, of the man who had exiled his mother and who had thought Eugène too despicable to be given even a captaincy. And he achieved his dream. With Marlborough at his side, he swept the French armies before him. . . . Then when his dream was won, he thought of the king, his enemy, dying practically defeated, and although he did not regret his conquests, he realised their futility. He dreamed then only of peace. With the French commander Villars he argued about terms, their efforts being continually defeated by the greed of their respective courts. Villars was quite right when he remarked during the negotiations: "We two are friends. Our enemies are: mine in Paris and yours in Vienna!"

When Eugène was a lad he was taken before Louis and the king would not even speak to him, let alone give him a command; he stared blankly over the youth's ugly head. Until then Eugène had adored Louis with an almost feminine passion; after this his emotion changed to an equally feminine hatred, then this too faded, was merged into a feeling of pitying sympathy. He had broken the French king's power, but was it worth it? Now he had to live on amidst political intrigues in the corrupt court of Vienna, his only relaxations being amongst his books, his menagerie and at the card table of Countess Batthyány. He, the greatest soldier of his time, became the greatest politician of his time. But he was never happy. In the first place he had no one to leave his vast fortune to; the niece who inherited his house and money sold everything—books, papers, everything—until the outraged Viennese pinned insulting verses on her door. At first the desire for revenge had dominated Eugène's life, then, when revenge was satisfied, he worked for a greater German Empire, only to be continually frustrated by the petty ambitions of his rivals. Lonely and weary he died in



Marshal Villars

From "Prince Eugène," by Sir George MacMunn (Sampson Low)

his magnificent palace, one of the most tragic figures in world history.

These books complement each other. Herr Frischauer's is a psychological and often brilliant biography (although the translation is sometimes sadly weak and it lacks that most essential thing, an index), Sir George MacMunn's work is mainly military and contains seven excellent plans and maps. Herr Frischauer skips over the battles in a most annoying fashion, but then Sir George skips over nearly everything else to get to the battles. Therefore these books should be read together, Herr Frischauer's first, and Sir George's afterwards as a kind of appendix. Eugène's life is well worth both books.

When he left his army after his last defeat of the Turks, his soldier's lifted their guns and shouted a song of triumph. It was a song of ecstasy, of love, of reverence. That song rang through the world, the song of Eugène, of the penniless Eugène who by indomitable courage and determination rose to the greatest possible power. It still echoes through both these books and stirs the reader to the triumphant realisation that man after all is something magnificent, and that his spirit is unconquerable.

MANY LIVES

Kingdom Come.

By Hugh Redwood. Paper, 1s. net ; Cloth, 2s. 6d. net. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Looking at the Lord's Prayer with the eye of a practised journalist, Mr. Redwood was impressed anew by the comprehensiveness of its teaching and the conciseness of its form. Desiring to set down some account of the spiritual transformation he has undergone during the last six years, he decided to expound the Prayer in the light of his own experiences. The result is this frank and challenging little book. Much of it is concerned with definite answers to specific prayers, and with the evidence which has convinced the author that Divine guidance is being exercised in human affairs—not only in the general ordering of life, but in ways which are surprising, supernormal and individual ; what a past generation called "special providences."

Coming from such a man, such a book challenges the complacency of all who think they know the limits of the possible. Cases of physical healing are recorded which, to say the least, are amazing. What are we to say of a woman who, after years of medical treatment, was dismissed from hospital as incurable ; who was unable to walk, stand or sit, spinal disease having reduced her to a state of partial paralysis, and shortened one leg four inches ; who was forced to use a spinal support, abdominal belt, pelvic support, leg-iron and surgical boot ; and who after prayer was cured literally in a night, her limbs being (to her own amazement) straightened and strengthened, so that she was able to walk without aid, and has been able to lead a normally healthy and vigorous life ever since ?

Different explanations would no doubt be given according to the presuppositions of the reader. Some would be content to class (and dismiss) it as a case of "mental healing." To give a thing a name however does not explain it. True the influence of the mind is so astonishing, and its limits at present so impossible to determine, that one must speak cautiously. But in the case in question religious faith released healing forces which would otherwise have been inoperative, and whose effect appears far to transcend the normal limits of psycho-therapy.

Even more remarkable are the cases of "guided" help Mr. Redwood records. They have the merit of being first-hand experiences, and cannot be summarily dismissed. There is an account of the moving of a mountain of apathy and despair in the Rhondda Valley by faith wielding an eminently materialistic shovel, which should challenge every church and local council.

The book is one of many which are marking the resurgence of passionate and creative religious faith to-day. "Revival" has begun again, but not as a mass movement, nor in any atmosphere of superficial emotionalism. It is the individual who is seeking and finding God in various ways, and as a consequence the present revival is characterised by the widest dogmatic tolerance.

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Collector

ENGLISH BOTANICAL BOOKS

by Iolo A. Williams

Books about flowers and, especially for English people, books about English flowers, are enjoyable and sometimes extremely beautiful things. Naturally their appeal is greatest to those who have some knowledge of plants; but the illustrations many of these books contain, and occasionally also the prose, make them attractive also to booklovers who have no claim to be considered botanists. I know at least one library to which its owner has added a good number of old botanical works, simply for the pleasure of occasionally turning over their leaves and looking at the coloured plates.

To the collector of English botanical books there are, I suppose, three (or perhaps they should be called four) publications of primary importance, though their price is such as to put them beyond the reach of the small collector. The man of moderate means however may, with an extra squeeze of the purse, afford them if he cares enough for his collection to do so. First among them is John Gerard's "Herball," a folio originally printed in 1597. It is adorned with a multitude of beautiful woodcuts, which sometimes give strikingly good representations of the plants. Those of the maize, or "Turkey Corne" as Gerard calls it, may be mentioned as good examples. The author gives a quantity of often quaint information, notably when he tells of "the Vertues" of the various plants. For instance, of the lily of the valley we are informed that

"The flowers of the Valley Lilly distilled with wine, and drunke the quantitie of a spoone full, restoreth speech unto those that have the dum palsie and that are fallen into the Apoplexie, and is good against Gowte, and comforteth the hart."

Evidently a very worthy plant, besides being a pretty one and sweet-smelling.

With some copies of Gerard's "Herball" is bound up his "Catalogus Arborum Fruticum ac Plantarum," 1596 (or another edition, 1599)—a list of the plants which grew in his own garden. This, when it is present, adds considerably to the price of the "Herball." The late Dr. B. Daydon Jackson, for many years secretary of the Linnæan Society, edited a reprint of this catalogue, which was privately printed in 1876. The "Herball" was enlarged and revised by Thomas Johnson, and his edition, a folio issued in 1633, is the second of the four specially important books referred to above, and is really the best edition of Gerard. It was reprinted in 1636. Incidentally I may mention at this point another book by Johnson—the "Iter Plantarum Investigationis ergo susceptum a Decem Sociis, in Agrum Cantianum" (1629), an account of a botanical expedition into Kent. It is said to be the earliest of English local floras—a type of botanical book of which I shall say more later in this article.

Third of the four "high spots" (to use a somewhat odious collector's expression) is that great folio work, the "Flora Londinensis, or Plates and Descriptions of such Plants as grow wild in the environs of London," by William Curtis. It was issued in parts, beginning in 1777, and a fine uncut copy of the original edition is one of the noblest books of its kind. A second edition began to appear in

1817. This too is a fine work, though not so fine as the earlier edition.

Fourth comes the first and, so far as beauty of plates is concerned, the best edition of "English Botany," a work which began to appear in 1790, and took more than twenty years to complete. Supplements were issued even later. It is an octavo, and the plates are the work of James Sowerby (1757–1822). They remain on the whole the best of all illustrations of English wild flowers, though naturally much has been learnt as to British plants since Sowerby's day. The text of the book was by Sir James Edward Smith, whose name however did not appear in the first volume. A set of the original edition of "English Botany"

is one of the abiding pleasures of the flower-lover's library.

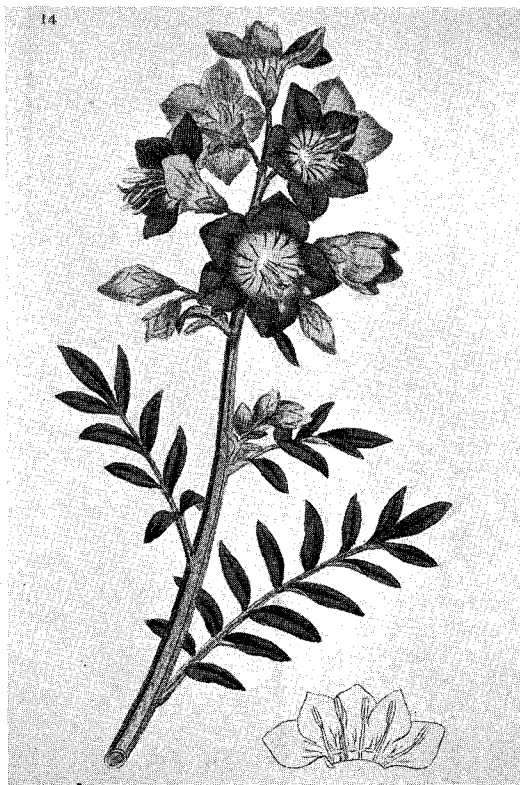
I mentioned a few lines back the subject of local floras. These books are primarily lists of the plants growing in various more or less restricted areas, though they often contain, by the way as it were, valuable descriptions of species or varieties. They form a most interesting (and on the whole comparatively inexpensive) type of book for a field-botanist to collect. They are moreover surprisingly numerous, though many of them are individually very rare. The best private collection of them that I happen to know is that of my friend, Mr. Francis Druce, who in a good many years of collecting has managed to get together nearly three hundred British local floras. To his kindness in allowing me the run of his bookshelves my present article is largely indebted.

Johnson's "Iter Cantianum" of 1629 has already been mentioned as probably the first English local flora. Another early one was the "Catalogus Plantarum circa Cantabrigiam Nascentium," printed at Cambridge in 1660 by

the University Printer, John Field. This small octavo was anonymous, but the author was the famous naturalist, John Ray, whose first publication it was. The main part of the book is arranged alphabetically according to the Latin names of the plants. There is also an index of the English names, and after that an "Index Locorum" which gives lists of plants growing in such still botanically well-known localities as the Gogmagog Hills and Cherryhinton.

Among local floras published comparatively early in the eighteenth century may be mentioned J. Blackstone's "Fasciculus Plantarum circa Harefield Sponte Nascentium," duodecimo (1737); and C. Deering's "Catalogus Stirpium: A Catalogue of Plants naturally growing and commonly cultivated in divers Parts of England, more especially about Nottingham," an octavo printed at Nottingham in 1738. Of a rather later date, 1777, is an interesting duodecimo, Edward Jacob's "Plantæ Faverhamienses." This has a portrait of the author for frontispiece, and another plate represents a freakish form of the green-winged orchis, *Orchis Morio*. The book is in addition notable as giving, in an appendix, a short account of fossils found in the Isle of Sheppey. Still later in the century, in 1794 and 1798 respectively, come J. Sibthorp's "Flora Oxoniensis" and C. Abbott's "Flora Bedfordiensis."

With the nineteenth century, the local floras become so



Polemonium Cæruleum

From the First Volume, 1790, of "English Botany"

numerous that I cannot attempt to discuss even a selection of them in this brief article.

There are obviously a great number of books to be collected in this field of English botany. Not all, even of the attractively illustrated works, are expensive to buy. So pleasing a book as Thomas Martyn's "Flora Rustica," four volumes, 8vo (1792-94), with its agreeable and often very characteristic coloured plates, can be had for a matter of shillings, or at most a guinea or so. Moreover there is considerable amusement to be obtained out of some of the more or less botanical publications of the past—especially from a type of chatty little book, freely interlarded with verse, which was very popular in the middle of last century. One that may be mentioned is "The Botanical Looker-Out" (1842), of Edwin Lees, who as a poet had many qualities peculiar to himself. This, for example, is how he ends some verses on the pimpernel's habit of shutting its flowers during rain:

"And thus 't is vain to o'erpower
A maiden with flatteries and pelf;
For true love like the Pimpernel flower
Is best when it opens itself."

All the same he was not a bad botanist.

Some Booksellers' Catalogues

by Iolo A. Williams

From Messrs. Dulau, of 32, Old Bond Street, London, comes catalogue number 218, devoted to books on Botany and Gardening. Included in this is a section of some thirty or more British local floras. Some of the earlier of these are: C. Abbot, "Flora Bedfordiensis" (1798), 9s.; R. K. Greville, "Flora Edinensis" (1824), 3s. 6d.; C. C. Babington, "Primitiæ Floræ Sarnicæ: or an Outline of the Flora of the Channel Islands" (1839), 2s.; Jones and Kingston, "Flora Devonensis" (1829), 6s.; and J. Sibthorp, "Flora Oxoniensis" (1794), 4s. 6d. More modern examples are: G. C. Druce, "Flora of Northamptonshire" (1930), £1 1s.; Hanbury and Marshall, "Flora of Kent" (1899), 12s. 6d.; Lord de Tabley, "Flora of Cheshire" (1899), 10s.; and C. E. Salmon, "Flora of Surrey" (1931), £2 2s. Two copies of the first edition, folio (1597) of J. Gerard's "The Herball, or General Historie of Plantes" are offered at £25 apiece.

Messrs. James Tregaskis & Son, of 66, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1, send a list (number 1008) of old books on Medicine and Biology. Lord Bacon's "Historia Vitæ et Mortis," 12mo (1623), first edition, is priced £22. Among the illustrations in this catalogue is the reproduction of a spirited full-page anatomical diagram of a horse, from a very rare quarto published in 1609, and entitled "A Verie Perfect Discourse and order how to know the age of a Horse and the diseases which breed in him, with the remedies to cure the same: as also, the description of every vayne, and how and when to let him blood, according to the diversitie of the disease." A good descriptive title anyway. The author of this book, which costs £12, is only known by his initials, L. W. C.

Messrs. Blackwell, of 50-51, Broad Street, Oxford, have forwarded to this journal copies of two recent catalogues, one (339) of Theology and the other (333) consisting of the second part of their list of *Orientalia*. This has reference to books on Western Asia, India and the Far East. There are some 4,300 items arranged in two main sections—History, Travel, Religions, Arts, Antiquities, etc., and Philology and Literature. In the latter section the languages which have sub-headings to themselves include Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Indian languages and dialects, Sanskrit (sixteen pages), Pali and Prakrit, Zend and Pahlavi, Chinese, Japanese, Malayan and others.

An eighteenth century catalogue comes from Mr. Bernard Halliday, of 1, King Richard's Road, Leicester. Defoe and John Wesley are the authors most fully represented. Among the Defoe items is an edition of "Robinson Crusoe" which is something of a curiosity. It is an octavo in two volumes, printed at the Logographic Press in 1785, and

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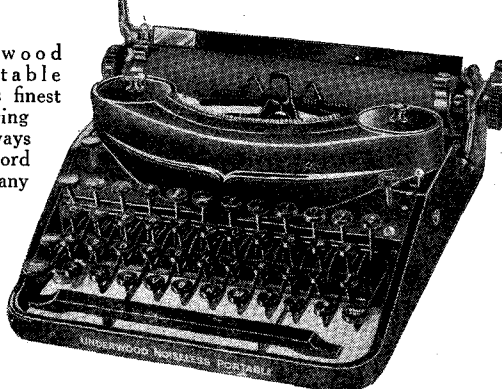
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now priced £2 2s. Logographic printing—which means printing from types which represent not single letters but whole words—was an invention of John Walter, founder of *The Times*, which newspaper was originally printed logographically. Walter's logographic type is still preserved in the British Museum, I believe. Two books which occur upon consecutive pages are worth noting. One is James Thomson and David Mallet's "Alfred: A Masque," 8vo (1740), an uncut copy of the book in which

"Rule, Britannia" first appeared; and the other Isaac Watts's "Psalms of David Imitated," 12mo (1719), in which "O God Our Help in Ages Past" was first printed. They cost respectively £12 10s. and £2 2s.

A catalogue, number 114, containing more than thirteen hundred miscellaneous old prints, is issued by Messrs. Suckling, of 13, Garrick Street, London, W.C.2. The prices are mostly very low, and the prints include many very odd and out-of-the-way things.

SOME POINTS IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY POETRY

Points in Eighteenth Century Verse.

A Bibliographer's and Collector's Scrapbook. By I. A. Williams. Bibliographia Series No. VII. With 4 plates in collotype and 9 facsimiles. Edition of 500 copies. 21s. (Constable.)

Comment on the format, excellence of typography and illustrations is hardly necessary in connection with any book in this distinguished series. Nor is it necessary to dwell at length on Mr. I. A. Williams's qualifications for writing on this subject both adequately and attractively. Readers of his "Seven Eighteenth Century Bibliographies" know of his wide researches into the bibliography of the period and his special preoccupation with books of eighteenth century verse.

The book, which contains far more than the title implies, is divided into three sections. The "Introduction" contains two essays; the first, "The Pleasures of Collecting," describes Mr. Williams's experiences and enthusiasms as a collector of eighteenth century verse. In the second essay, "Some Bibliographical Considerations," he considers the general problems that emerge from the second and main section of his book, "Collations and Points." The third section, "Three Lists," contains "A List of Books to which Samuel Johnson was a Subscriber," with notes concerning the relations of their authors with Johnson; "A List of the Principal Individual Collections of English Verse of the Eighteenth Century," in which he makes an arbitrary selection of the principal collections of one hundred and fifty-five authors, in the hope that it may be of use to collectors and librarians; and with the same purpose, "Miscellanies," enumerating forty-two of the more important volumes of composite authorship of the period.

The sections of greatest interest to the bibliographer and collector are "Some Bibliographical Considerations" and "Collations and Points." The latter is so thoroughly and painstakingly presented as to disarm all criticism. Full collations are given of forty-one books by twenty-four authors and all variations noted so meticulously that, as Mr. Williams states, he has given the reader "every facility

for coming to an opposite conclusion to my own if he considers my reasoning faulty." This policy, pursued throughout the whole series, of presenting all the facts so as to enable an intelligent observer to draw his own conclusions, is one of the cardinal virtues of "Bibliographia" and in praiseworthy antithesis to the pontifical and arbitrary statements of opinion, unsupported by evidence, with which we have been presented elsewhere. Mr. Williams shows his clear understanding of the intricacies of eighteenth century printing, and examples such as Samuel Boyce's "Poems on Several Occasions" (1757) and James Thomson's "The Tragedy of Sophonisba" (1730) bear out his remark that "there is probably nothing, however extraordinary, that could not happen in an eighteenth century printing house."

The essay "Some Bibliographical Considerations," to which we look for his exposition of the general principles underlying the method of attack on the problems analysed in his main section, is not quite so satisfying. His definitions of "edition" and "issue" are by no means clear, and the qualification in the opening sentence of his third paragraph—"The reader now perhaps has an understanding of the sense in which 'edition' is used in this book"—is not without reason.

The chief general consideration that Mr. Williams discusses in this section is that of what he calls "the hidden later edition," the book that bears the superficial appearance of a first edition, but is in reality a reprint. He enunciates some general principles that may be applied to the detection of these hidden later editions but emphasises that there is no touchstone to their identification. Only by investigation and comparison of many examples can they be detected and his main section contains several instances of the solution of this problem.

The question of large or special paper copies is dealt with at some length. Mr. Williams is chary of being dogmatic about them, but produces a wealth of fact and speculation that is of obvious value to the bibliographer and collector.

E. A. Osborne

THE BOOKLOVERS' CIRCLE

LONDON

January 24th.—Mr. Hugh Ross Williamson, whose lecture on the poetry of T. S. Eliot was one of the outstanding features of the programme two seasons ago, delighted the Circle by a further talk on "Modern Poetry." The Chair was taken by Mr. Henry T. F. Rhodes, author of "Genius and Criminal," "Chutes and Crime" and other books on the science of criminal investigation. Mr. Rhodes has also found time to follow in the footsteps of the modern poets. Giving its full meaning to the term "modern," Mr. Williamson dealt at some length with the work of W. H. Auden, Cecil Day Lewis and Stephen Spender. For the purposes of his subject W. B. Yeats and T. S. Eliot were outside the scope of the discussion, though his passing references to "The Tower," and to such a poem of T. S. Eliot's as "Marina" (which he read in full) were among the most interesting parts of his talk. He

showed how the work of the modern poet was full of a revolutionary spirit. It was concerned less with the individual than with the social state of the world. Yet the romantic note continued to appear, as in such lines as those of Stephen Spender beginning: "I think continually of those who were truly great."

In the after-discussion the Chairman very wisely imposed limits as to what aspects of the subject should be considered relevant, and the discussion, to which eight or ten members contributed, was for this reason unusually good. Mr. Williamson answered questions as they were put, and the prolonged applause which followed the vote of thanks gave proof of how much the evening had been enjoyed.

M. A. S.

February 7th.—A "truly rural" evening. We had in the Chair a nature-lover in Mr. W. R. Calvert, with

memories of Cumberland in his mind (whose latest novel, it will be remembered, has the title, "The Hungry Hills"), and another nature-lover in Mr. Reginald Arkell as lecturer. Mr. Arkell had as subject a fellow-Wiltshireman, Richard Jefferies, his delightful book on whom, one gathers, has led to a renewed interest in the works of the genius of Coate. Of Jefferies's life and writings Mr. Arkell gave us a vivid and absorbingly interesting account, delivered extempore, with wit, humour and penetrating insight. There was a thrilling description of how, before he knew anything of Jefferies, he was reading an essay by him and, struck by his knowledge of some landmark, he verified the places Jefferies had referred to indirectly by taking a cycle ride along the fascinating Marlborough Road. Then came an account of the boy Jefferies searching the hedgerows, to the disapproval of his elders; his work as descriptive reporter for a county paper; and how a letter written by him to *The Times* on the Wiltshire labourer's lot led to his debut as an essayist and the writing of his book. At the close was a warm protest against the iniquities of the copyright Act, and an eloquent appeal to the townsman: "The country is England; help it; it needs help just now." Begun by Mr. Hugh Ross Williamson (who found in Jefferies if not a magnetic writer, at least a prophet of the economics of our fuel supply) there was an animated discussion. It ranged over such questions as to whether the best place in which to write about the country is away from it; whether walking is or is not a townsman's craze rather than a countryman's habit; the copyright problem; Jefferies's sad later years; and the future fame of another Wiltshireman, Alfred Williams (1877-1930), of South Marston, whose works in prose and verse showed him also as a keen nature-lover and as one who, beginning life in a humbler sphere than Jefferies, produced work of a wider scope and perhaps of a more permanent appeal, though it is still known to comparatively few readers. Mr. and Mrs. G. B. Burgin, Mr. Benington, Mrs. Champion de Crespigny, Mr. F. A. Downing, Mrs. Lyon, Mrs. Heywood and Mr. Francis Aitken were among the speakers; and a warm tribute to the lecturer by the Chairman brought a stimulating evening to a close.

W. F. A.

Programme

March 7th.—Mr. Shaw Desmond on "Critics and Criticised." (We hear that Mr. Shaw Desmond's novel, "The Story of a Light Lady," has reached the ranks of the best-sellers, and also that he himself, with Professors Julian Huxley and E. W. MacBride, has been appointed Vice-president of the International Institute for Psychical Research, which has been formed for the purpose of investigating psychic phenomena on strictly scientific lines, and will have its head-quarters in London.) (Chairman: Miss Nellie Tom-Gallon.)

March 21st.—*Annual Dinner*. Guest of Honour: Mr. Anthony Bertram, author of "The Pool," "Pavements are Peaks," "They Came to the Castle," "Three Meet," etc. (Chairman: Mr. Hugh Ross Williamson.) Tickets (7s. 6d.) now ready.

April 11th.—Miss Clara E. Grant on "The Highbrow Writer and the Lowbrow Reader." (Chairman: Mr. G. B. Burgin.)

(Saturday Ramble Programme ready shortly.)

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Mrs. Sophie Hine, Mayfield, Meopham, Kent.

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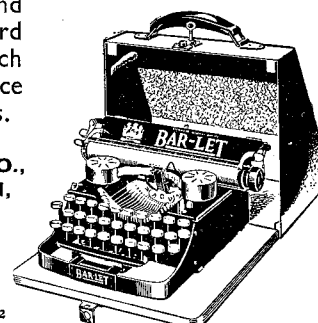
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Recent Fiction

IN SEARCH OF THE POINT

by James Hilton

Night Shift.

By Richard Blaker. 7s. 6d. (Heinemann.)

Maze.

By Margaret Dale. 7s. 6d. (Constable.)

Scent of Magnolia.

By Carmel Haden Guest. 7s. 6d. (Harrap.)

I confess that in novels, as in jokes and in arguments, I have an old-fashioned weakness for a good point; if there is no point at all, or if it is too transcendental to be grasped, then—for me at any rate—entertainment value is seriously diminished. I cannot for instance get "Night Shift," by Richard Blaker, into proper focus; which is a polite way of saying that I do not think Mr. Blaker has got it into proper focus. That he is a fine and sensitive writer needs no stating; he has given us one of the best war novels in English literature; whatever he does is eagerly looked for. All the more reason then why "Night Shift" comes as a disappointment.

It centres upon the life and routine of an all-night garage not very far from London; one of its lady customers is having an affair with a famous surgeon; one of its skilled mechanics, who adores her secretly and selflessly, has a wife who is dying of cancer. By chance the two threads are drawn together, so that the surgeon and the mechanic are able to help each other. The former's help is naturally enough the admission of the stricken woman into his own private clinic; the mechanic's help takes the form of a very odd and rather incredible murder. Such a summary does less than justice to Mr. Blaker's plot; but it would be no fairer to say more. The qualities of the book are its subtleties of writing and its queer, almost mystic feeling for machines. The rhythm of the internal-combustion engine dominates the story, and if the reader is himself passionately interested in cars he will probably enjoy "Night Shift" a great deal. But even then he may wonder, as I did, just what exactly is the point of it all.

With Margaret Dale's new novel, "Maze," the point is that there is no point; and that of course one can accept. Her story is just a light-hearted frolic in which a group of leisured young people get themselves into a muddle of relationships and then get themselves out again—neither the muddle nor the solution having any quality of significance. George and Hereward, the twins who were so apt to be confused together, provide a pleasant mechanism for misunderstandings; while Jane and Jessica, their respective ladies, respond with gay and unflagging zest. Miss Dale has a surplus of wit and keeps up a lively patter of inconsequential dialogue that is as easy to read as it is difficult to write, and her "much ado about nothing" is decidedly agreeable. After a few of her characters have spent an evening at the theatre she adds the comment: "They all agreed that it was a very good play, but could not remember what it was all about." This, a week after reading it, will probably be what most readers will feel about "Maze"; but they will remember that they enjoyed it.

Mrs. Haden Guest's "Scent of Magnolia" is a thoughtful study of a special case—that of a sensitive child of an Anglo-Argentine marriage. Harry Alvarez Smith was sent to school in England, and was unhappy; he pined for the *estancias*, hated cricket, and found that the defeat of a British army at Buenos Ayres in 1808 was not featured in the school history book. You would have expected him to hate England, after all this, especially as he endured a precocious and unrequited passion for an English girl. Not so, however, for when he returned to Buenos Ayres he felt himself half English amongst his compatriots, and looked with disfavour on the opulently sensual life of Argentine youth. His disillusionment became complete when he made the discovery that his second love (a "beautiful lady" whom he met by chance and instantly fell for) was one of the numerous victims of old Spanish-American custom.

The Brass Knocker.

By Edward Rathbone. 7s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)

Gallows' Seed.

By Princess Paul Troubetzkoy. 7s. 6d. (Grayson.)

Hungarian Rhapsody.

By Sheila Fitzgerald. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

"Scent of Magnolia" is a recommendable novel, and whether at home or abroad, its pictures have an air of being authentic.

"The Brass Knocker" is queer stuff. Its author has plenty of talent and an unusually large vocabulary, but both are undisciplined to an extent for which any amount of cleverness can hardly atone. One would guess Mr. Rathbone to be a young man, for there is a good deal of the roaring twenties about his way of writing as well as about his choice of subject. Briefly (but the briefness is mine, not his) he describes the arrival of a commercial traveller at a house of ill-fame in the English provinces, and the man's discovery that one of the girls there is his own daughter. The shock is fatal, and the other visitors, not wishing for publicity, are at pains to dispose of his body by dumping it in the street near a doctor's house. The author seasons this strong meat with lashings of social and quasi-religious rhodomontade; and the result, to my taste, is not entirely appetising. But if Mr. Rathbone has somewhat failed, it is only fair to add that with such a theme it would have taxed the efforts of a Tolstoy or a Balzac to succeed.

Since it is a recognised maxim that all's fair in love and novel-writing, there can be small objection to the fact that one of the central incidents in Princess Paul Troubetzkoy's new novel, "Gallows' Seed," is the murder of a betrayed girl by a young poultry-farmer who is anxious to press his suit in a more advantageous quarter. Life, as some of us may recollect, is occasionally apt to be like that; and the authoress, in setting her scene on the Dorset coast within sight of Portland, has heightened the drama. "Gallows' Seed" is interestingly written, and its characters are shrewdly imagined.

The last book on my list is by far the best; indeed by the very highest standards it is very good indeed. "Hungarian Rhapsody" is a full, rich canvas of post-War life, in which the affairs of two Hungarian families, for long in chafing contact, at last fuse into tragedy. Sheila Fitzgerald is apparently a first novelist; yet nothing could be more mature than her complete success in portraying a wide range of scenes and characters in Budapest, on the Riviera, and most notably of all against the tranquil background of the feudal Hungarian country-side. These Ehrenfelds and Horváths—passionate, sensitive and intelligent—are real people; and Margit, with her vixen beauty and her thoroughbred tantrums, makes a memorable portrait. Nothing is overdrawn; everything is clear, pointed and credible; and the whole result is a first-class piece of work. We shall look out for Sheila Fitzgerald again.

BLACK MIST. By Commander Attilio Gatti. 18s. (Hutchinson.)

Commander Gatti's previous books have been records of travels as exciting as one man could wish for in the course of his life; but with an apparently insatiable urge out into the undiscovered always actuating him, Commander Gatti has once again deferred to his instinct, and as a result we have here another of his inimitable accounts of journeying through Africa, and meeting incidentally the most remarkable adventures and the most remarkable individuals one can imagine.

The "Black Mist" is the phenomenon of the native mind, which Commander Gatti attempts to penetrate, and practically succeeds. He appends some of the native chants and legends in a sort of wild dithyramb, which certainly elucidate one's understanding of the depths to which the native is bound in superstition and age-long fears.

YOUTH IN A TEMPER

by Joanna Cannan

The Scarlet Flower.

By Thomas Rourke. 7s. 6d. (Nicholson & Watson.)

A School for Scoundrels.

By Axel Bracey. 7s. 6d. (Rich & Cowan.)

The Corner Shop.

By Philip Keeley. 7s. 6d. (Dent.)

At the beginning of his book, though the mouthpiece of one of his charming young South Americans, Mr. Rourke tells us that "the ultimate sophistication is the appreciation of simple things," and this little phrase analyses, I think, the charm of his brief, unusual novel. In a verbose age his simplicity of style is refreshing and astoundingly effective: in a few words he creates an unforgettable picture of the southern town where Philip Barnes, a prosaic American citizen, meets with love, adventure and tragedy. If there is a weakness in this enchanting book, it is in the character drawing; for me, neither Raquel nor Philip are ever quite alive; nevertheless their tragedy is very moving. Closing the book, one realises anew the power of simplicity and economy as opposed to a flood of words: a few weeks ago I read a novel of over seven hundred pages and I have forgotten every word of it, but I shall not forget Mr. Rourke's San Cristóbel before I am ready to give myself the pleasure of reading his book again.

I suspect that Mr. Axel Bracey is a very young man. He is certainly a very angry one. Had he been content to tell us what he knows about the underworld of London, he might have written an interesting novel; as it is, he has given us an unreasonable and I think unmannerly tirade against law and order and authority of any kind. The first pages of the book describe the familiar sufferings of adolescence at the mercy of sadistic schoolmasters; then we are shown the home of the Trent boys and the crass stupidity and mental dishonesty of parents in general. The terrible tortures inflicted on Youth by Age might have harrowed me if I could have believed in Mr. Bracey's public schoolboys (who wear their school caps in London during the "hols," and in the intervals between kicking, shooting and beating one another, mouth such sentences as "the adult male asserts his masculinity and establishes his personality by protecting") or in the Trent parents ("Your father is an officer and an English gentleman. . . ." "They are too wealthy to approve our simple pleasures. . . ."). Anyhow the soul of Desmond Trent is so seared that he "declares war" on "that Thing"—"Age or Society or Authority or the Law or the comic God of the Respectable Majority." He descends—on a noble quest it is true—into the Underworld, becomes a member of a gang, thieves and fights, and when his quest is over, renounces Respectability to cast in his lot permanently with the great-hearted crooks, for "it is honest to steal openly and not under cover of the law," and "it is a more manly thing to force an entry and chance a scrap with a policeman than to sell unsound shares to fools . . . than to sell shoddy clothes to the poor, than to live on rents extracted from slum tenants."

I am afraid that few people will take Mr. Bracey's fit of temper seriously enough to agree with his publishers that "this is an immoral book"; one feels that Mr. Bracey has come straight from an unpleasant interview with his uncle, and was just too old to slam the door.

We have been told often enough that we are a nation of shopkeepers, and perhaps that saying was in Mr. Keeley's mind when he set out to write the story of a corner shop in the northern manufacturing town of Ferborough. Certainly while we are reading of the shop and of the strange iron-willed woman with the trader's heart, who runs and owns it, we are fascinated; it is when the scene moves to London and we follow the unremarkable fortunes of the young Brennens that the story drags. Fortunately we are allowed to return for a last glimpse of Mrs. Bennen, deserted by her children, paralysed by a stroke, caught for income tax on transactions for years omitted from her returns, yet undefeated, by virtue of her indomitable will. If Mr. Keeley had sifted his material more vigorously, he would have given us a more dramatic

Work of Art.

By Sinclair Lewis. 7s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)

The Breton.

By R. J. White. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

The Convenient Marriage.

By Georgette Heyer. 7s. 6d. (Heinemann.)

book; his portraits of the young Brennens are curiously woolly; though Jim as a small boy is sharply drawn, as a man he is quite without character. "The Corner Shop" is however very readable and pleasant, and a little out of the ordinary, thanks to Mr. Keeley's knowledge of a newsagent's trade.

Mr. Sinclair Lewis's new book is not so important a piece of work as his "Ann Vickers," but it is excellent entertainment. In his hero, Myron Weagle, the born hotel-keeper, he has created an honest, likeable, single-minded creature, for whom one feels an enormous sympathy; less gifted—or less human—authors can heap the most terrible misfortunes on their heroes and leave us untouched, but it will be a dull heart that does not share something of Myron's disappointment in the failure of his work of art, his dream hotel. This is essentially a novel of common day, and beside Myron's courage, energy and enterprise, his brother Ora's literary successes seem meretricious, undeserved. At a time when fiction is too much concerned with the whimsies of disgruntled genius, it is refreshing to read the story of a practical and contented man.

And now for two historical novels. "The Breton," by R. J. White, is based on a true story, the story of the famous René de Chateaubriand's cousin, Armand; of his boyhood and adventures in Brittany; his exile in Jersey; his heroic return to France, and tragic execution. The book is written with charm and imagination and makes a special appeal to lovers of the sea, but this author has a curious wayward habit of ignoring his most golden opportunities; while he describes at length relatively unimportant scenes in Armand's youth and courtship, he allows a magnificent fight in an open boat at sea, the death of Armand's rival, and even Armand's execution, to be merely reported. Inserted between the chapters are "interludes," chunks of pure history, which are out of place, I feel, in a romantic novel; most of us have a working knowledge of the French Revolution, and their effect is to destroy the rhythm of the story. They can however be skipped, and there remains a very readable tale of adventure, distinguished by a certain glamour—Mr. White knows his haunted Brittany—and the sound of the sea.

Miss Heyer's novel, on the other hand, is a faultless piece of work. Miss Heyer has two moods: she can write serious historical novels and, concealing her deep scholarship (yet it is there, solid beneath every detail of manners, dress and speech) she can write historical romances which are light as a *soufflé*, bright as a diamond, merry as the proverbial May morning. We have been told that Romance brings up the nine-fifteen, but we have never believed it; what we really mean by Romance is here in Miss Heyer's pages, in the swing of the cloak, at the point of the sword. And we have been told many things about Love and we may have believed them, but here is Love as once we saw it, gay and courtly, its path rough but not too rough for gallant hearts, and the brisk click of happiness on page three hundred and thirty. Miss Heyer is to be congratulated on achieving so brilliantly exactly what she has set out to do.

COMETZ. By George Weston. 7s. 6d. net. (Methuen.)

This is a "scientific" extravaganza—without Mr. Wells. The proximity of a comet puts most of the electrical machinery of the world out of joint and leads—that is Mr. Weston's "honest tale"—to an alarming decrease in the birth-rate. One man alone proves capable of propagating his kind. The national (American) situation is deliciously painted *à la* Hollywood, the international with close-ups of Paris, Berlin, Tokio, and so on. The hero does emerge—almost miraculously—quite a likeable fellow, from the welter of the story.

IDEALISTS—AND WOMEN

by Edith Severn

De Vriendt Goes Home.

By Arnold Zweig. 7s. 6d. (Heinemann.)

Everard Bringle.

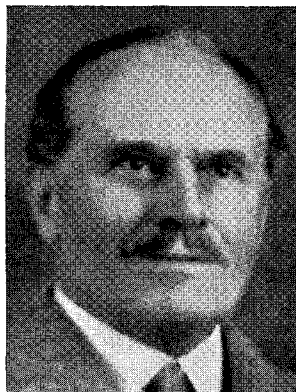
By John Owen. 7s. 6d. (Gollancz.)

The Disappearance of Martha Penny.

By Horace Annesley Vachell. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Death of Henrietta.

By Lorna M. Armistead. 7s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)



H. A. Vachell

War upon Women.

By Maboth Moseley. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

Portrait of a Beautiful Woman.

By Chris Massie. 7s. 6d. (Sampson Low.)

Herr Zweig has produced a worthy successor to "The Case of Sergeant Grischa." He tells a story of modern Palestine during the time of the 1929 riots. In Jerusalem, a hotbed of political unrest owing to the hostility of Jew to Arab and the more complicated antagonisms between

orthodox Jews and progressive Zionists, a learned Jewish Rabbi is murdered. Obviously suspicion falls on an Arab assailant, but the affair is lost sight of in the turmoil of fighting which immediately breaks out over a dispute regarding the Wailing Wall. De Vriendt however has the knack of inspiring love as well as hate. His young Arab pupil, Saud, and the English secret service man, Irmin, do not forget, and by them the murderer is traced and dealt with, though it is considered impolitic to bring him to justice in the ordinary manner. While the tone of the book is reflective and free from theatricalism there are some highly dramatic moments, especially when Irmin finally encounters the murderer.

This is not a propaganda novel; Herr Zweig's integrity as an artist is too strong, but it is impossible to ignore that he has written on a subject very near his heart, written with a passionate sincerity all the more impressive because of the restraint of his language and the fairness of his attitude. For what is he pleading? In the words of his hero, De Vriendt, what every decent writer wants is "The truth for its own sake, justice for the sake of mankind, mercy for the community's sake, love for the sake of God. The courage to defy one's own race and tell them where they are wrong. . . ." A not ignoble ideal if somewhat difficult of achievement.

Mr. Owen brings dignity and a sense of proportion to his portrait of a sensitive young man awakening to social consciousness in the early years of the last century. Everard Bringle, son of a typical Tory lord and landowner, gradually becomes aware of the misery and oppression that engulf the lives of the poor. His uneasy consciousness is crystallised into clear vision by an incident, beautifully described by the author, where a pickpocket leaps into the Serpentine to save a fellow man and is himself drowned. In a flash Everard realises the essential nobility of man, even the lowest and most depraved, with the corollary that "to sin against the happiness or liberty of the poorest or most wicked is to sin against God Himself; and that the record of his class in respect to its relation to other classes must be a criminal record." Brave thinking this, in 1830.

Everard is slow in understanding where his principles will lead him, and the extent of the sacrifices they will exact. Torn by conflicting loyalties he fights a seat in the Tory interest only to resign it within a few days undeterred by Peel himself. For him there is no turning back, and the inevitable end is tragedy, the telling of which is distinguished by much serious beauty and a gracious unhurried style.

That country villages are not as dull as they would appear to the passer-by has long been accepted as a

truism, but it is not often that one has an opportunity of getting below the surface of an idyllic village like Nether Applewhite to find such a rich mixture of intrigue, villainy and heroism. Officially the village policeman is the hero, with pretty Nancy White as his heroine, but there is a very good second in Dr. Girling who rescues his Mary from a disastrous engagement, and after all, as the title indicates, love interest is not paramount. There is a prettily worked out mystery or rather collection of mysteries which dovetail neatly into each other, and a lot of hard work has to be put in by our constable and his amateur detectives before affairs are brought to a satisfactory conclusion. As a chronicle of village life with a spice of intrigue as well as romance this is excellent value for money.

The title of Miss Armistead's book is a misnomer, for it is only incidentally and by a slender thread that the death of Henrietta affects the lives of the two families depicted in this sombre story. Henrietta's nephew, a university lecturer, becomes mentally deranged and retires with his wife and two children to his native northern town. The mill which once belonged to his ancestors is now in the possession of his landlord, a grim old widow still embittered by the knowledge that her husband had been in love with the dead Henrietta, and there the connection ends. Old Mrs. Hearne has two nephews of whom the elder is killed in the War and the younger, returning shell-shocked and subject to murderous fits of passion, retires to a farm. Between him and the lecturer's daughter a strong sympathy springs up, in fact the poor girl seems doomed to minister to abnormals all her life.

No gleam of humour is allowed to penetrate the gloom and savagery of which this fatalistic story is made. Perhaps another "Cold Comfort Farm" is needed to persuade authors of considerable ability to desist from writing this sort of thing.

The first chapter of "War Upon Women," a Ruritarian drama, is decidedly impressive in a rather flamboyant style. The author has a sense of situation and the ability to tell a story, and her sketch of a present-day dictator is not without wit and point. Later the book becomes rather stereotyped both in matter and manner. War upon women, by the indirect methods here displayed, is nothing new, nor is it described from a new angle. Clichés run easily from Miss Moseley's pen, and her characters tend to become types, but her undeniable gusto will doubtless please many readers.

"Portrait of a Beautiful Woman" gives in detail the hectic career of April Auversant, wife, mother, widow, mistress, business woman, famous dancer and revue artist. Crudely written, there is not much to distinguish it from dozens of other sensational novels.

BLOODY MARY'S. By Geoffrey Dennis. 7s. 6d. (Heinemann.)

The public school, the grammar school, the elementary school even, have been prospected, exploited and misinterpreted by novelists in search, one presumes, of entertaining or diverting subject. Conspicuous among novels which managed by reason of their authors' dexterity not so much to misinterpret school life as to elucidate it, was Mr. Dennis's "Mary Lee." In "Bloody Mary's" Mr. Dennis does not so much "recapture" (as the publishers insist) the "method and manner" of his earlier book, as quite simply reproduce it; that is, "Bloody Mary's" does not supply the reader with that opening surprise or excitement which an original book should supply. It trades again the counters of his previous novel, with very little added. All that was said of "Mary Lee" could be said of "Bloody Mary's," excepting that it is an original new novel. Apart from a few alterations of subsidiary characters, names, localities and other minor affairs, his latest novel proceeds along precisely the same lines, with precisely the same dramatic gait, as "Mary Lee." There is no denying though that Mr. Dennis has the gift of telling a story effectively.

TWO CLASS-WAR NOVELS

by Wynyard Browne

It's a Battlefield.

By Graham Greene. 7s. 6d. (Heinemann.)

In a Province.

By Laurens van der Post. 7s. 6d. (Hogarth Press.)

Holy Wednesday.

By Manuel Gálvez. 6s. (Bodley Head.)

Blind Alley.

By J. Thompson. 7s. 6d. (Allen & Unwin.)

Truth is not Sober.

By Winifred Holtby. 7s. 6d. (Collins.)

"The true author," says Señor Gálvez, "considers himself as a kind of medium." I am inclined to agree



Photo: Reprograph Studio

Winifred Holtby

that that is how creative writers should be considered. The trouble with mediums is that the communications made through them are usually trivial. For some time past that has certainly been the trouble with most novelists. Probably they are not to blame. The times and circumstances have not been propitious.

But a change is taking place. It might be said that writers are beginning to realise their social responsibility, or, if we withhold praise as well as blame, that the social situation is now such that writers can communicate more than insignificant details of it. However they come to be written, we must welcome enthusiastically books like "It's a Battlefield" and "In a Province." They are both books in which the actions of individuals are seen as part of the action of a group in the community, and the issues between them are seen as incidental manifestations of a larger issue. Mr. Greene's theme is the class war in London, and Mr. van der Post's the class war in South Africa where it becomes inter-racial. Neither author has allowed himself to distort his vision into propaganda, with the result of course that their books are very admirable propaganda indeed. Truth is after all what the few just men in the world wish to propagate, whatever political or religious label may be attached to them: and whether or not you are a Marxist, you can hardly deny that rightly or wrongly there is a class war in progress. There has even been something about it in the papers. Not only is the presentation of aspects of this war a thoroughly salutary activity for the novelist but, if he is an honest medium, he is probably making such a presentation willy nilly, whether it is recognised or not.

Mr. Greene presents its aspect in London where the battle is so vast and complex that none of the rank and file on either side can see what goes on outside his own 'small circle' or know the significance of the action. Many of them—and this is perhaps the most important point he makes—do not even know that "any great conflict is raging."

His story involves characters as diverse as a Commissioner of Police, a girl in a match factory, a patroness of the arts, a Bloomsbury revolutionary and a Soho waiter. He uses the fashionable cinematographic technique—and even cribbs from René Clair's "À Nous la Liberté" the comparison between a prison and a factory—but his style has caught some of the slick theatricality of the movies. Although from a primly literary point of view this spoils the book, by turning tragedy into melodrama, perhaps it will serve to make it as popular as it deserves to be.

Mr. van der Post has less eager an eye for immediate "effects," and gives himself more time to build up his characters. The class war in South Africa becomes a struggle between the capitalist white nations and the black workers, and gives rise to foully inhumane, though not of course inhuman, treatment of the negroes. From

conversations with frenzied Americans I have long been convinced that the colour prejudice in America at least and probably elsewhere, is almost wholly rooted in fear of losing ground to the black races in the economic struggle. (White men are not lynched for seducing negroes.) Mr. van der Post—who is a Dutch South African and therefore not likely to be a congenital negrophile—corroborates my conviction.

His hero, a young Boer from the veld, goes to be a shipping clerk in Port Benjamin. At the same time a negro boy arrives in the town to be servant in the lodging house where the young Boer is to live. They are both simple and honest, both strangers in a town where their different inherited traditions do not seem to apply. For a short time they become friends. But the negro discovers the pleasures of the town, and serves a term of imprisonment after a disgraceful trial depending on the whims of an irresponsible interpreter, on a false charge of assault and battery. The friends lose touch with one another. At the end of the book—after the young Boer has been considerably enlightened by an English communist as to what life in the towns is all about and is still behaving with commendable caution—he finds his friend, now become a drug addict, blackmailed by the government to cause rioting at communist meetings, so that they may have excuse to take drastic action against the leaders. After an unsuccessful attempt to intervene, the young Boer is himself shot. The story is told with care and restraint. "In a Province" is a moving, tragic and illuminating book.

His publishers say that Señor Gálvez is "perhaps the most sensitive and characteristic of the writers who in recent years have created a truly national literature in the Argentine Republic." "Holy Wednesday" is certainly odd, and perhaps its oddness is merely the quality of being Argentine. It describes in some detail the last day in the life of a Roman Catholic priest, and we see Buenos Ayres through the grid of his confessional. The city is apparently populated almost entirely by people worrying about adultery. The priest is saintly, abnormally fat and a flagellant. All the confessions combine to remind him of a long forgotten sin of his own until finally the woman of his past arrives in his "sentry-box" with disastrous effect upon his blood pressure. Once an angel appears to him in the shape of a little child; the devil twice, as a man with a rasping voice and as a large bat. Were it not for the publishers' phrase "impressive solemnity," I should be inclined to believe that Señor Gálvez's intention was satirical.

"Blind Alley" is a simple, rather unconvincing story of life in a Lancashire slum. The hero is altogether too "lovable" to be true, and the author indulges a sentimental humour about the bohemianism of the very poor which is much too refined to be funny.

Miss Winifred Holtby's stories, each admirably entitled, make no claim to be more than good journalism. They are certainly that. Miss Holtby always makes her point with precision. Special mention might perhaps be made of "The Man Who Hated God," in which Lenin, after his death, discovers that he is a god in the same boat with Buddha; and also of the title piece, "Truth is Not Sober," in which Truth, in a state of intoxication, takes a "realistic" novelist round the world and shows him how cock-eyed everything is.

CHILD PERFORMER. By B. van Thal. 3s. 6d. (White Owl Press.)

Mr. van Thal's brief studies of nothing much in particular do not read very amusingly, as they were apparently intended to do. His little story, of a man who wished to adopt a little girl but is run over by a taxicab, does *not* grip the reader as it might have done with more adroit handling. The trouble with Mr. van Thal's method of telling a story is that it does not work. A writer must have some knowledge of how to manipulate words before he can succeed in producing an effect, much less a story worth reading. Mr. van Thal, it seems, has yet to acquire that knowledge.

SUPPING FULL WITH HORRORS

by Marcus Magill

Murder on the Orient Express.

By Agatha Christie. 7s. 6d. (Collins.)

Watch the Wall.

By Laurence Meynell. 7s. 6d. (Harrap.)

Murder Among Friends.

By "Simon." 7s. 6d. (Wishart.)

End of an Ancient Mariner.

By G. D. H. and M. Cole. 7s. 6d. (Collins.)

The One Sane Man.

By Francis Beeding. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

They Came By Night.

By Seldon Truss. 7s. 6d. (Jarrolds.)

The Hunting Ground.

By Morris Sutherland. 7s. 6d. (Rich & Cowan.)

Evidently the writers of thrillers mean to make us sit up in 1934! Almost every one of these books is deliberately calculated to make us turn our eyes resolutely from the clock, whatever the time of night, until the conclusion is reached.

Who, for instance, could tear himself away from the sleeping car on the snow-bound Orient express in which the body of Mr. Ratchett lay stabbed in twelve different places? One of the passengers had committed the murder, and M. Hercule Poirot, who chanced to be on the train, sets himself to find out which it is. Miss Christie's detective, who mellows with the years, here performs a brilliant feat of deduction. Even though one cannot quite swallow the explanation of the crime, one cannot but pause in admiration at the ingenuity of the author's invention. To have found a new way of keeping the suspects in one spot until the mystery is solved is a feat in itself, but there is much more than that in this book—good writing, amusing characterisation and Poirot ("a *darlin'* man!") at the top of his form.

In "Watch the Wall" Mr. Meynell has turned from detection to sheer, full-blooded adventure, and I for one have no complaint to make. His hero is a temporary clerk in an estate agent's office, who has to show a lovely girl and her fiancé over an empty house. Actually he had no right to do so, for the house had just been disposed of to another client, but that was no reason why Judith Storm, left for a moment alone in the hall, should vanish into thin air. How Tony got on the track of the dope-smugglers who abducted her, by what strange adventures he arrived at the lonely house at Rye, and the obstacles he encountered before the happy ending, I will leave you to discover. This entertaining story (just the thing for a railway journey) goes to a brisk accompaniment of breathless escapes, hand-to-hand scraps, disguises and a murder or two.

"Murder Among Friends" did not thrill me. Guy Pudet, an elderly historian, lives with a young wife in Cornwall. While he writes in his garden hut, she amuses herself with "The Group," a party of most ill-assorted "friends." One day Guy's typewriter is still and its poisoned master a corpse on the floor. The detective is his stepson, the criminal the most unlikely of the friends. And why any murderer should try to add to his victims merely because of the staging of a reconstruction of the events that preceded the original crime, is beyond me.

The new "Cole" is not, strictly speaking, a detective story, although Superintendent Wilson makes a belated appearance on the scene. Nor can it be called a thriller, for thrills are not the speciality of these authors. What they set out to do—and accomplish most successfully—is to give the reader a crime story about real people. Philip Blakeway's efforts to hide the truth about the "End of an Ancient Mariner," his endeavours to wriggle free of the slowly closing net, hold our attention because they are plausibly described and because we are on the criminal's

side. He is a likeable scoundrel and, when the story moves to its inevitable conclusion, we are glad to find even a small loophole of escape left him. The story is always interesting, and the characterisation is careful and convincing. As for the coincidences necessary to the plot, life itself is so coincidental that they are I think justified. On two small points only do I question the authors' statements: B.B.C. announcers no longer talk of "London Calling"; and surely laudanum rapidly disappears from the body after death.

The chief character in Mr. Beeding's story is a financier with a scheme to set the world on its feet again. But governments are slow to act except under duress, so "The One Sane Man" abducts the economists and other experts necessary to work out his scheme, finds a mad scientist who has discovered the secret of weather control, and holds the threat of fog, ice and snow over the heads of the nations. Incredible? Perhaps, but Mr. Beeding has a persuasive manner. You will be convinced and excited in spite of yourself. You may meet some old friends, too, in this book—Colonel Granby on the side of justice (or is it injustice?) and the Mighty Magistro among his opponents.

There is speed in the writing of "They Came by Night," but to me it was the speed of a train on an oft-travelled journey. We have seen all the landmarks before—the beautiful girl in hideous danger, the fatally amorous villain, the equally amorous, but much more gentlemanly, hero. The plot concerns an attempt to blind the inhabitants of Great Britain by a mysterious infection and a large part in it is played by an autogiro which seems to come and go without the slightest notice from air officials.

In company with Mr. Seldon Truss, the author of "The Hunting Ground" asks us to believe that deadly danger is an incentive to falling in love. Perhaps it is. At all events, there are two beautiful ladies and two heroes in this story. The scene is set in the Balkans, where an English journalist and a Russian ex-officer defeat a Bolshevik plot. They have some awkward moments, and uncomfortable ones, too, before they succeed.

GOD AND THE RABBIT. By Michael Home. 8s. 6d. (Rich & Cowan.)

Published a few weeks earlier in America than in England, this novel deserves the success it has already achieved the other side of the Atlantic. It has power, substance and a compulsive atmosphere of doom, surcharging the simplest of its constructional happenings. Derived, it seems, very indirectly from the earlier novels of D. H. Lawrence, it emphasises rather the common strains which run through its characters, than those fundamental tendencies of the spirit upon which Lawrence preferred to concentrate. And yet "God and the Rabbit" manages to impart an admirable sense of the purely domestic or overt fundamentals of its three or four major characters: Harry Francis, the son, who institutes with his mother a collusion against his father; the mother herself, unable really to feel violently antipathetic to her husband; and the husband, the elder Francis, an excellent piece of portraiture—handsome, dominant, totally renegade. Upon these three people the author constructs the *motif* of his novel, showing how, as the father continues to evade his obligations, they devolve upon the son until, by the time he reaches manhood, it is to him that the family turn for their support, and upon him depend for their self-respect, their moral integrity and their unity.

Mr. Home is to be congratulated on having handled his material so competently. Nothing would have been easier than for this novel to have collapsed at the first false stroke. But by reason of the author's patent urgency of feeling, his entire submersion in the story, he carries off an extremely evasive attempt. Let us hope that his book is read as widely in this country as it is being read in America.

George Barker

Poetry

RAINER MARIA RILKE

Rainer Maria Rilke : Poems.

Translated from the German by J. B. Leishman. 5s.
(Hogarth Press.)

RILKE is one of the most significant of modern poets, and his importance is international. He is indeed the least German of all German poets; it is possible for the reader to appreciate the few poems in this selection, without feeling that he need enter very far into the German mind. For Rilke was a man of international temperament; he travelled very widely, deliberately selecting the material of poetry from his travels; he was for some time Rodin's secretary, and in all his writing he is obviously very much under French influence. What is significant about his poetry, as much as the language, is the imagery: and in particular the manner in which he observes things, so that the contemplation of any object in one of his poems immediately makes one aware of his metaphysic. Both these qualities are well conveyed by Mr. Leishman, and as English poems these translations are striking and beautiful.

In Rilke's poetry the picture of a woman playing a piano, by an immediate transition, becomes part of his view of life:

"She breathed her fresh white clothes distractedly
And put into the cogent exercise
Impatience after some reality
That might arrive to-morrow, to-night, that waited
For her already, tho' someone kept it dark."

The intensity with which he would contemplate an object is Oriental:

"That blind man standing by the parapet,
Gray as some nameless empire's boundary stone,
He is perhaps the thing-in-itself-alone
To which Eternity's image Time is set,
The silent centre of the starry ways;
For all around him strives and struts and strays."

The translation is straightforward and, for the most part, accurate, although, by some odd lapse, it contains omissions. For example in the "Olive Garden," in the line "and the disciples stirred uneasily," the fact that Rilke wrote "in their dreams" is not translated; and in "Orpheus: Eurydice: Hermes," the line "schwer und verschlossen aus dem Fall der Falten" is replaced by the one word "clenched."

The critic should also add a word of warning, which should have been contained in an introduction. This book gives the skimpiest sample of Rilke's works. Out of several volumes of poetry it selects less than forty poems, and most of those are very short. Moreover some of the most typical poems, such as those about animals in the Zoo at Paris, are not attempted. This volume is far less representative than the thin "Ausgewählte Gedichte" published in the Insel-Bucherei. The inclusive title "Poems" is therefore misleading.

There is no explanation here of the principle which Mr. Leishman adopted in making his selection. Why is the beautiful sonnet on the Archaic Torso of Apollo not translated? It is of course possible that Mr. Leishman only translated the poems which he found easiest. This would be very understandable, but the

by Stephen Spender

reader who knows nothing of German ought to have had this explained to him. Further there is no account of incidents in Rilke's life which are extremely relevant to the understanding of his poems.

HERBERT PALMER

Summit and Chasm.

By Herbert E. Palmer. 5s. (Dent.)

"On hills of peat
The lambs bleat . . ."

Here is the reiteration of a well-known tune. The emotions of this lyricism are well known to us, the form expert, the language careful, chosen with a precaution which enables one to anticipate the turn of the next phrase in the next line. We once railed at the renaissance of classicism because it bereft us of half our vision and half our senses, having an answer in its own terms for every demand. Is not this negative perfection true of the kind of lyricism of which the two lines quoted above are not unworthy example? The answer we demand is given in its usual form with its usual assertion.

In making the suggestion of a demand and an answer in poetry one is only approximating. For the reading of poetry is not an affair of intellectual determination. The very nature of Mr. Palmer's work forces this kind of demand and supply analysis, which would not be adequate where the expression is more absorbing and in fact total. The condemnation of a poet as of being one of a certain way of life and thought and therefore unsatisfactory would be unjust to Mr. Palmer. As a generalised response however is demanded by implication as soon as one approaches his work so the response becomes identified with the individual: and in questioning the integrity of the response one assesses the individual.

"Summit and Chasm," the supplement to his collected poems, is a collection of poems dexterous in rhyme and discreet in form. Mr. Palmer is best when he is simple and unaware of his simplicity. For more often than not he is striving after a simplicity both in language and in thought rather as an end in itself than as a means to an end. His effort, sincere as it may be, is self-consciously an effort and has the tone of an emotion repeated at second hand: not an experience miraculously described.

Invoking St. Joan,

"Oh gird us with their white Simplicity . . ."

we begin to feel the cumbersomeness of that white blankety mantle, a weight of over-simplicity, and draughty as the ending of the poem on the death of Queen Alexandra:

"She is joined to Heaven's whiteness,
Her throne is a star."

In moments of a more earthy liveliness Mr. Herbert Palmer has a truer poetic simplicity:

"Warm rose wind of Life,
Or the steel of Death,
Propelled whizzing knife,
Or the Sun's breath;

"Blue wind of Stand-fast,
Yellow wind of Change,
Red wind to rive and blast,
Green wind to estrange."

Only when he allows himself a natural grace without garments which one recognises too readily is one able to appreciate that "pleasure and disturbance" with which, as he asserts in his preface, he wishes to fortify his readers.

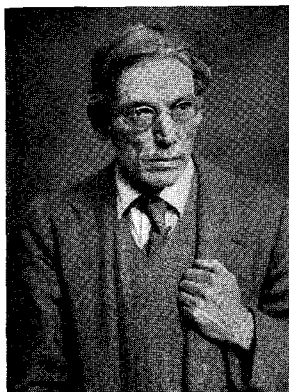
John Pudney

VARIOUS SINGING SHOOTS

by Herbert Palmer

La Belle au Bois Dormant.

By Edward James. 3s. 6d. (Duckworth.)



Herbert Palmer
(A. Cherry, St. Albans)

The Nettle and the Flower.By Kenneth Muir. 5s.
(Oxford University Press.)**The War Resisters.**By I. M. Hubbard and Hilda
Hubbard. 2s. 6d. (Oxford :
Shakespeare Head.)

Poetry is as various as trees and bushes in Hertfordshire. But it is more subject to changes of taste. One age accepts one kind, and the next age gently rejects the same, or ruthlessly cuts it off. The essential drive is the sap, for there is probably no such manifestation as poetry arising out of mere

art, out of art alone. The title poem of Edward James's "La Belle au Bois Dormant" is perhaps somewhat deficient in sap, for the voice is Edith Sitwell's, and such deliberate or unconscious derivations or parodies, even though they may sound more natural than the originals (as Edward James's verses sometimes do) never really speak to a reader. At the beginning of her poetic career Edith Sitwell made the exciting discovery of Milton's phrase "blind mouths," and thought that by similarly transferring sense values and qualities half a score of times on every page, her particular poplar tree would soon dominate Parnassus. But despite all such artificialities of faking, and the intrusion of Mallarmé as well as more desperate nonsense, there is rather more reality in Edith Sitwell than that, and when Edward James writes :

"The reek of grass, the fat of hay,
the grease of sunlight, the noonday;
the warmth, the flowers with their closed lips
at whose shut doors the vain bee sips,"

he merely drives us to the original poet.

But in the centre of the book there is a very sappy lyric called "Song of a Girl," which is a thing of sheer delight; and though I am not at all certain about "deaf with the sound of my heart the drummer," I think that if it does not outlast our great-grandchildren it hopefully ought to.

Other poems of Mr. Edward James are worthy of mention, particularly "Shut Gates," the lunatic soliloquies of a mad old squire, which brings back memories of old ballad songs; though more often the voice is that of a well known modernist, as in :

"What of their laughter!
What of their scandals!
Keep to your Rome,
keep out the Vandals!
Shut in your home,
let nothing in after

the milkman, the butcher and postman have been."

Kenneth Muir's book, "The Nettle and the Flower," though freely scattered with other poets' lines and phrases, has more continuous kick in it; and I must confess to reading through nearly the whole book at a sitting, so interesting and vital did I find his despairing, though distinctly musical voice. But, of course, being a young poet he has his influences; and semi-tones of Oscar Wilde's wilderness poem, "The Sphinx," and James Thomson's "City of Dreadful Night" seem to have got into the first half of it, with perhaps rather more of "The Sphinx" than "The City of Dreadful Night":

"Burn up the Deuteronmic curse!
Raze out the sordid decalogue!
And shrivel up in flaming verse
the paltry statutes made for Og!"

or with rather less technical power :

"And even the spiral nebulae
revolve like leaves or eddying snow,
like tops that twirl perpetually
in absolute futility,
blind, and unconscious that they go."

I do not admire many of Mr. Kenneth Muir's "sentiments," nor the occasional craziness of his rebellious taste. It is nonsense to call the decalogue "sordid," or ask that it should be obliterated; but I do admire the energy of his hate and disgust, to say nothing of his artist's conscience, which is not content with slummocking formless lines—drab and dingy though many of his passages may be. His verse reads easily and arrestingly, even his free verse, because it was made for the voice rather than the eye (as all verse should be made), and it is therefore not astonishing to read that some of it has been used by the B.B.C. Nor is it all grey and despairing, working forwards as it does into shadowy light, and ending up finally with a prayer for clear light: "O Spirit, come! Lighten the darkness where I dwell alone." At moments his strong, compelling utterance rises or carols into song, as in :

"Imagination soars—I stand,
Eternity on either hand;
my leaden thought is turned to gold,
and all life's glory is unrolled."

Out of the nettle Danger Mr. Kenneth Muir has not exactly plucked the flower Safety, but he has given us a most readable—and speakable—book; and one too that excitingly confronts modern social deterioration.

"The War Resisters" (bound, oddly enough, in the pre-War Prussian flag colours of black and white), by I. M. Hubbard and Hilda Hubbard, is more old-fashioned. Neither of these poets, in spite of their illustrious fore-runner, believes in giving bones to dogs, but rather fat meat to lost sheep—who, it is to be feared, prefer grass. The thought and feeling throughout is that of Holy Writ, particularly of the Apocalypse, but the language can sometimes be identified as Victorian, even as Swinburne's :

"Now the gage of rebellion is hurled; I dare and defy thee,
O World;
Lo! thou hast drugged thee with wormwood, yea, thou
art poisoned with gall;
Thou hast turned thee from sweetness and light; and the
planets are dark in thy sight;
Thou chantest a hymn to the Hideous and settest th
Beast above all."

Their hatred of war and acute consciousness of the necessity for the Christian message flavour their book rather too strongly with the sauce of propaganda; but they have a transforming wand tucked up one of their sleeves and can occasionally write true poetry.

Poetry, it seems, will still go on. And though few will be chosen, many will be called.

FIRST CHILDHOOD. By Lord Berners. 8s. 6d. net. (Constable.)

One of Lord Berners's musical compositions was a highly jolly funeral march for a dead aunt. This autobiography—many of the names of people and places are fictitious—is a sonata and fugue to dead yesterdays that would be almost too bitter and macabre for retrospection, if the author had not been able to treat them with a sardonic humour and fantasy. The book is confined to Lord Berners's infancy—it ends on the day he left "prep" school. Highly strung, his spirit was marred (or made) by preoccupied parents and conventions and callous schoolmasters. "That dreadful 'manliness' again," he records the impression of the first day at school. He was early devoted to surreptitious Chopin, who was of course "morbid" to authority. We should be grateful for much more of Lord Berners's story. For if this instalment is a counterblast to Kenneth Grahameism, his wit would illuminate all his years.



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W. J. TURNER'S NEW POEM

by C. Henry Warren

Jack and Jill.

By W. J. Turner. 2s. 6d. (Dent.)

If dates and labels meant anything, I suppose we should have to call Mr. Turner a Georgian. But dates and labels, where poetry is concerned, really mean very little. (Where for instance are we to put Hardy, and where Yeats?)

As a matter of fact, Mr. Turner never did fit very comfortably into those famous volumes of Georgian poetry. For he was never an escapist. He may, like Mr. de la Mare, have created for himself a world remote from actuality—a world of chiselled stone, and frozen music and frescoed men and women—but that world was an effort of pure creation and not a mere evasion.

Moreover that early phase, comparable perhaps to the Celtic twilight phase of Yeats, did not last, was never consolidated into habit. As Mr. Turner the man grew in experience, so Mr. Turner the poet sought continually for new means whereby to express that crowding experience. And through all that experimentation he managed to keep alive within him the passionate intensity, the constant awareness, which alone can save the poet at the last.

With "Jack and Jill," it seems to me, he has finally established his claim to be considered one of the finest poets of his time. Here (at any rate for the time being) experiment ends. The poem is an objectification so very nearly perfect that, like Mozart's music, it achieves the impersonality of great art. Indeed I think this parallel with Mozart's music might be pushed even further. The poem is contemporary—but only as the "Jupiter" symphony is unmistakably of the eighteenth century: not in any finite, limiting sense. It is lyrical—but only as the Queen of the Night's arias in "The Magic Flute" are lyrical: not in the sense of adolescent spontaneity but as a medium proper to the whole content of the poem.

Travel

THE ISLES OF GREECE

From Olympus to the Styx.

By F. L. Lucas and Prudence Lucas. 12s. 6d. (Cassell.)

This is the book to take with one to Greece, of all the accounts the most packed and perfect. It has also an individual magic, managing, as it passes from point to point, from place to place, to bring out the essential thing one wants to know or to be reminded of. Only the best sort of imagination, the best sort of scholarship, could hit it off so well. As in the account, too long to quote, of Ithomê and the Messenian Wars.

The text can be compared to a piece of most skilful weaving. It is the authors' business, as in all such books, to get in as much as possible, and this is how they do it.

First, the physical aspect of the place, its enchanted natural loveliness. Then, the quality in which the Greek peninsula is unique, that to every name, stream, hill-top, village, heap of stones, a name is attached and a story of the utmost significance and international familiarity. Epidaurus, Delphi, Tiryns; Argos, Corinth, Mantinea; Tenos, Delos, Taygetus; Mount Cithaeron, Tempê, Ithomê. The magic of names is the most powerful of all the magic of words, and the evocative power of these is without parallel. So we have first the names, the places, the stories. Then their contrast with the state of affairs to-day. The squalid, contented villages, the vile food, the invariable bugs, the mercifully returning prosperity—which means municipal enterprise, sometimes for the worst kind of show. The cross-bred population, the horrible trail of americanisation which is destroying local values; the peasant integrity that still exists. (Each village now has

In the old nursery rhyme Mr. Turner has seen a convenient framework on which to stretch a symbolical story of common experience. The Jacks and Jills of this life ascend the Hill and "become like gods and know it for their one true home." But being human and not gods, they are intrigued by the pool of knowledge that shines on the peak, and must needs dip their pail in the "death-dealing draught"—only to find alas that

"The intellectual like the sensual eye,
By that which gives it life must also die.
So Jack who filled his pail with light, made blind,
Saw Jill no longer, both had but one mind,
And it was in the pail. O treason bright,
Can two intelligences make one light!
Their minds no longer strove and so they fell
Down through the bottom of Truth's hopeless well."

Then follows a description of that Hell into which they had fallen—the Hell (if you like) of sophistication:

"One wisdom's there, and therefore all are wise,
One truth prevails, and therefore only lies.
Perfected science yields up all its laws
Since they are based upon a known fixed cause—
Satan, the primal principle of hell,
Of whom none speak though all there do his will."

But the poem does not end here. "The Mended Crown" follows—a visionary epilogue of a wiser Jack and Jill, and of their children—

"Destined like them to rise, also to fall,
To miss and yet to further life's ideal."

Throughout there is a fusion of satire and lyricism far ahead of anything that Mr. Turner has yet achieved. If he has objectified his meaning too severely for casual readers, that is a fault on the right side. For those who take their poetry seriously there is here, underneath the often estatically bright music, a profundity hard to match in present-day poetry.

by Mary Butts

a personality, christened the "Hullo boy," who has been in the States and speaks the kind of English you would expect, and who makes it his business to lodge the traveller and show him round for the benefit of his own relations.)

All this has to be worked in, and not overworked. Never do the authors yield to the temptation of filling a chapter, which should be devoted to a re-evocation of the Olympic Games, with trivial personalia about the present.

While there is a final side to any full account of a great historic land. A side which is usually neglected, and which should tell us what happened outside the epoch when the place was of supreme importance to mankind. This final grace is not absent in this book, which gives in passing the most fascinating reference to the Greece of the Middle Ages, the Turks, down to the War of Independence in Byron's day. How many people realise that there was a Norman kingdom there, and every romantic delight of mediaevalism? Or the coming of the Turks after the Fall of Constantinople? Or what really happened when Shelley wrote "Hellas" and Byron laid down his life for a set of people so wildly unlike the Hellenes of antiquity as to make one impatient at the sacrifice?

Or were they so unlike? The question is cynical and rather silly. When all is said and done, men are judged by their fruits; and the relative value to mankind of the ancient and the modern Greek needs no protesting.

Mr. and Mrs. Lucas have written a book of which, for once, it is honest to say that no praise can be too high. The homesick, would-be traveller walks beside them. (Only in the next edition there should be an index. It is too serious a book to leave many readers groping for a reference.)

STUDIES FRENCH AND ENGLISH. By F. L. Lucas.
10s. 6d. (Cassell.)

"I have not set out to give a new view of him; simply to find him new readers. He is not indeed in the modern fashion; that is only one more reason for reading him. He cared . . . for the grace of Greece and the gravity of Rome. They are out of date, according to the yapping of our nine days' deities." That, which might epitomise Mr. Lucas's attitude, is from an essay on Ronsard which I think it fair to take as typical. Neither the best nor the worst in the book, with its cosy style and its wealth of engaging biographical trivia, it is an infectious enough essay. As a serious literary study its value is smaller. Mr. Lucas does not show for example how Ronsard is just inferior to Villon, and just superior to du Bellay. But he can list you some twenty-eight prentice borrowings, and on a single page manage to compare his Prince of Court Poets with a dozen improbable figures, from Sappho and Petrarch to Meredith and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, to conclude that his nearest analogues are Sir Thomas Wyatt and Mozart.

Shrewd and witty as ever, Mr. Lucas continues to amass, if not to penetrate, much charming literary lumber ("When I think that until a couple of years ago Ronsard was little more than a name to me, and recall the learned shelves of trash I read instead . . ."); and if he appears to write for no more urgent reason than that he has accumulated it, he can turn his learning into a very stimulating and "companionable" volume.

In each of these studies you get the intimate human touch ("I write this in my garden, under a plum tree . . ."), the period flavour, a few tart comments on modernity thrown in, and Mr. Lucas's choice of the plums of poetry and the plums of prose. It is a generous offering. After a couple of pleasant Plutarchian essays—on France and England, on Plowman and Langland—there follow annotated portraits of Ronsard, Montaigne, Herbert, Dorothy Osborne, Crabbe, Beddoes *père et fils* (it is on old Dr. Thomas Beddoes, where he is furthest from exercising his disastrous sense of literary values, that Mr. Lucas is at his very entertaining best), Flaubert ("lovable despite his peevishness"), the more congenial Proust and finally (as the dust-wrapper says) "an exquisite essay on Silence."

Because it is the sort of nonsense that needs demolishing in detail if it is not to be ignored altogether, I have purposely reserved comment on the penultimate essay, entitled "Modern Criticism." It is a vicious and stupid misrepresentation of T. S. Eliot and Herbert Read, against whom the full fury of Mr. Lucas's evident scorn for all indiscriminately that is "modern" pitifully expends itself. It does however teach us the necessity for charity and humility. And indeed, as he "peers over Montaigne's shoulder into the little mirror where he studied himself," and describes some features of a certain Fellow of King's, we feel that Mr. Lucas can sometimes be a very good fellow too. Assuredly if you have a fancy for the elegant and diverting superficialities of life and letters, Mr. Lucas will not disappoint you; but you will seek elsewhere for the use of poetry and the use of criticism.

Hugh Gordon Porteus

NAPOLÉON AND HIS MARSHALS. By A. G. Macdonell.
7s. 6d. (Macmillan.)

Mr. A. G. Macdonell has followed up a brilliant satire, "England, Their England," his first book, with a very clever and well-balanced historical epitome. It was no easy task to condense a study of Napoleon and all his twenty-six marshals into so small a volume—less than three hundred and fifty short pages. This is what Mr. Macdonell has done, enlivening his narrative by scores of vivid character-sketches and lively anecdotes. One's only serious complaint in respect to the book is that it lacks illustrations. Even those of us who are most familiar with the period cannot carry in our minds pictures of the outward aspect of all these famous men, and it would add immeasurably to our interest and enjoyment if we had their portraits in front of us while reading about their exploits. "A tall, stern, gloomy man with a heavy, stolid

THE BOOK-

Being short reviews of
Biography, History, Art,

by HUGH GORDON PORTEUS, FREDERIC WHYTE, HUGH

face and a big scar on his lip"—that is not enough to conjure up for us a vision of Marshal Sérurier; "a buffoon, a brute and a *bonhomme*"—these three words may cover, as our author claims, most of the character of Marshal Angereau, but they are tantalising without a picture of the man as he was in the flesh. If ever a book needed a gallery of portraits to complete it, it is this one. I think too that a careful bibliography would have added both to its interest and to its value. In a note at the end Mr. Macdonell proclaims himself "profoundly suspicious of almost all bibliographies." He declares that "nothing is easier than to hire someone to visit the British Museum and make a most impressive list of authorities, which will persuade the non-suspecting that the author is a monument of erudition and laboriousness." But a conscientiously compiled bibliography is welcomed by all readers, besides affording an author opportunity for rendering due thanks to previous workers in the same field.

Frederic Whyte

REAPED AND BOUND. By Compton Mackenzie. 6s.
(Martin Secker.)

Among prominent journalists Mr. Compton Mackenzie occupies no inconspicuous position; his faculty for reproducing in volatile sketches the adequate response to such subjects as "Standard English," "Writing for Money," "Hell," "The Dreams of Youth" or "What's in a Name" has earned him more than the simple pleasure of composition: it has earned him also an auditory which answers in turn to his rather hortatory essays and speeches with an exclusive assent slightly reminiscent of a school-master and his pupils. I mean that one seldom seems to encounter a reader of Mr. Mackenzie who fails to feel a deep and complete fervour in favour of his professed tendencies; and in particular his peculiar political tendencies.

In "Reaped and Bound" Mr. Mackenzie has produced—or rather reproduced, since all articles in here have been printed before—a volume which, although it may not enlarge the number of his adherents, will go all the way to satisfy those who have adhered to him. The approved characteristics are all present: irascibility, a weakness for the half-truth, an admirable and passionate determination and a pretty penetrative turn of mind, as when he writes: "I do not believe that anybody who was merely concerned to express himself with a pen would choose the novel as the form in which to do it, because the novel is obviously a perpetual compromise between other literary forms, and without any authentic form of its own." That I think constitutes a perspicacious statement. That he continues by saying that, therefore, the man who writes a novel performs an act equally as determined to extract money from the public as "the flinging down on the pavement of a piece of carpet by a street acrobat" completely detracts from it by being a simple untruth.

It is of such partially penetrative statements, marred sooner or later by commonplace platitude, that the book is made. Somehow or other one feels that Mr. Mackenzie hits those truths more by luck than judgment, and that it is in the expressing of half-truths that he expresses his own conclusions. The sentence with which he finishes his article on "Money and Happiness"—"So I will maintain that the only thing necessary to happiness is to know what one wants"—contains precisely that hint at truth, hidden in a vacuum of platitude, that his thought appears to be built upon; unfortunately so many of his readers live *within* that vacuum of platitude that it would take far more than a hint of truth to let them out.

MAN'S TABLE

a variety of books—
Travel and Fiction

I'ANSON FAUSSET, DAVID GASCOYNE, AND OTHERS

PACKHORSE AND WATERHOLE. By George Buchanan. 6s. (Angus & Robertson.)

A TRAMP ROYAL IN WILD AUSTRALIA. By Archer Russell. 10s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)

Australia in the sixties of last century was practically an unknown continent whose vast resources were with difficulty slowly being explored by a band of hardy, determined men. Exactly in what that difficulty consisted we have the records of many of those early pioneers to tell us; and now Mr. George Buchanan adds to that list of indomitable adventurers the story of his father's incessant wanderings in Queensland and the Far North of Australia. It is a story of constantly endured hardship and disappointment, with death never far off. The unknown beckons; it is the Promised Land; wealth is to be had for the searching: the plains stretch their patient pasturage; precious metals lie waiting in the lonely ranges. Nat. Buchanan marries, and sets out with his young bride to open out and settle these beckoning spaces and master their wealth. But always it seems that a hundred miles farther on the prospects are even better. Station after station is built, and abandoned. The enemies in the way are many: the annihilating distances, the droughts, the floods, the bush fires, the hostile aborigines. Australian literature is rich with the histories of such men; Buchanan has left a name behind him in Queensland that is among the most honoured of the early pioneers.

That Australia to-day is essentially unaltered: grim, beautiful, hard; and that the pioneering spirit is anything but extinct, there is Mr. Archer Russell's tale of his trekking north from Oodnadatta to remind us. At Oodnadatta, falling in with a typical lonely, self-sufficient inlander, one Tuck, he finds a congenial guide, companion and friend. The two set out together. Mr. Russell is a naturalist as well as a born wanderer, and his descriptions of the various animals, birds and plants met with are vivid and fascinating. He travels light-heartedly. He has a quick eye for scenery as well as character, and his book, lively at times, informative, interesting, has caught much of the essential enigmatic spirit of inland Australia.

Vernon Knowles

C. O. D. By "Anabas." 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

During the years of depression in the shipping industry, more than one vessel has left port manned from fo'c'sle to stokehold entirely by qualified mercantile marine officers. "Anabas" in this spirited yarn has gone a step further. He has formed the crew of a tramp steamer with a company of retired officers of the Royal Navy and three ex-ratings. The obvious difficulty, that cargo-work is a specialised business of which the naval officer can know little, is overcome in rather a neat way. Professional knowledge is supplied by one "Blowhard" (a happy character-study), who completes his year's training in the R.N. Reserve just in time to ship as second officer. Business advice and assistance come lavishly from a sympathetic shipbroker—a War-time member of the R.N.V.R.—who acts for a time as supercargo. Thus the ship's company has an authentic naval flavour, and yet can muster enough experience to turn an experiment into a financial triumph.

"C. O. D.," perhaps it should be explained, is the nickname of the prime mover in the affair. One hesitates to call him the chief character when he has such shipmates as the captain of the s.s. *Daphne* and the cook's mate, ex-A.B. "Nobby" Clark. At any rate C. O. D. threw up his service career, and practically risked his entire capital, in order to help his late commander and other brother officers who had suffered the "axe" and could find no

jobs. It was he who hit on the idea of buying a cargo-boat (at a bargain price) and enlisting the help of A.R.N.O. (the naval officers' benevolent association) to furnish the crew. With deck officers rated as A.B.'s and engineers as stokers, the *Daphne* soon began to produce not only profits and good-fellowship, but also excitement. She smuggled refugees from Russia; salvaged a derelict and beat a rival; and weathered a squall of hurricane force in the Bay of Biscay. Her doings are described with gusto and with more than a touch of humour, but she manages to steer clear of impossible adventures.

The male reader does not have things all his own way. While never losing sight of the stout little *Daphne*, the story winds continuously among the households of several of her company. Her captain has a pretty daughter; her cook's mate a charming sister, and—the marriage services are eventually read at sea by the captain. Then there is a domestic tragedy which the author handles with refreshing restraint, and deftly converts at last into comedy. He is at his happiest however when at sea; in his naval types, many readers will find old acquaintances.

It is clear, in spite of his preference for the term "on a ship," that the real name of "Anabas" is to be found in the Navy List. His heart is obviously in the navy, and it is possible that he lingers too long in the ward-room before he commissions to the *Daphne*. But he has written a lively yarn which can definitely be recommended for light reading—with its unobtrusive hint of serious intent.

D. P. Copper

THE LETTERS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT, 1817-1819. Edited by H. J. C. Grierson, LL.D., Litt.D., F.B.A., and Davidson Cook. 18s. (Constable.)

This fifth volume of Scott's letters contains about two hundred and thirty-five letters never before printed, and about seventy-five which have appeared before, not always however correctly. The three years covered saw the production of no less than four novels—"Rob Roy," "The Heart of Midlothian," "The Bride of Lammermoor" and "Ivanhoe." But there are surprisingly few references to their composition in the letters, from which one would rather gather that "the cultivation and improvement in my small estate," to quote Scott's own words, was his "chief amusement and occupation." To this subject there are frequent references, as also to the bad health from which he had begun to suffer, a cramp in the stomach which in 1819 culminated in a serious and very painful attack of jaundice. Among many other matters of contemporary interest in which he was involved was the discovery of the Regalia of Scotland in Edinburgh Castle and the death of the fourth Duke of Buccleuch. There is too the offer and acceptance by him of a baronetcy and the usual crop of local anecdotes, such as the whimsical *affair of honour* of Hogg, the Ettrick shepherd. Despite periods of acute physical pain the writing is no less racy nor the temper less buoyant than before.

H. I'An Fausset

THE JEW TO-DAY. By Sidney Dark. 8s. 6d. net. (Nicholson & Watson.)

The coat of many colours symbolises the Jew—he is flamboyant. Centuries of repression—and a religion which is not essentially joyous—have made him drab, *bourgeois malgré lui*. He is, much more than is credited, chameleon, taking on the colour and mood of his environment. Among executant musicians the Jew is pre-eminent. The Jews, far more than the Greeks, have been the fathers of European culture—the Jew has given himself away. It is impossible to think without thinking of the Jew—Spinoza, Freud and Jung, Einstein, Epstein, Bakst. Mr. Dark deals ably, if somewhat discursively, with the Jew's individual qualities, his relations with his fellows, his place in modern society, the source and nature of anti-Semitism, Zionism, the Jewish religion and its developments. He makes the point that many of the qualities Jews claim as theirs are not exclusively theirs—and what is there, say, in the music of Offenbach that is Jewish? We leave the author of this necessary book to-day debating whether the Jews will remain or disappear.



Kizhi: Church of the Transfiguration

(From the south-east)

From "Russian Mediaeval Architecture" (Cambridge University Press)

STONES OF RIMINI. By Adrian Stokes. 12s. 6d. (Faber & Faber.)

This is the second volume of Mr. Stokes's trilogy, and it is even less readable than the first, "The Quattro Cento." Fortunately for the benefit of any readers who might want to know what the book was supposed to be about, the author has included a few descriptive pages of Baedeker, describing Rimini and the sculptured reliefs of Agostino in the Malatesta Tempio there. This, and the many passages bearing the influence of Miss Semple's well known "Geography of the Mediterranean Region," are the only pages in the book from which the average reader is likely to gain any enlightenment.

A HISTORY OF EUROPEAN LITERATURE. By Laurie Magnus. 12s. 6d. (Nicholson & Watson.)

Internationalism is willy-nilly rampant, and there is no field in which it can prove more serviceable than that of literature. After all as far back as the Middle Ages there existed a knowledge of European literature in England, there was a comparative study of literatures. But this tended somewhat to disappear in isolation and insularity. Mr. Magnus undoubtedly fills a great gap in learning, for there is no other short comparative history. And he little knows of Carlyle who does not Goethe know. So, beginning properly with Dante, Mr. Magnus guides us

through the maze to Pushkin, the supreme Russian—to Rossetti and Dr. Samuel Smiles (of the same epoch) and beyond.

RUSSIAN MEDIAEVAL ARCHITECTURE. By David Roden Buxton. 25s. net. (Cambridge University Press.)

It is a relief to turn from the catastrophic failures of modern building schemes in Soviet Russia, which consist entirely of bad copies of imported Jewish architecture of an inferior brand, to the old native architecture, nearly always beautiful, of the Middle Ages. If it had not been for the adoption of the Byzantine plan of a dome surmounting a square, with the four attendant arms acting as buttresses—a plan as logical in construction as it is satisfying in aesthetic—there would be a great many more ruined churches in Russia to-day, for the Slav of former days was a no more successful builder than he is to-day. A good foundation is a rare thing in Russia, and there has always been a tendency—usual to flat countries—to build too high, but the excellency of the traditional Greek Imperial design was proof against the disaster which assuredly would have overtaken many a less conservatively planned building. But once adopted, the five-domed plan had come to stay. At the beginning of the sixteenth century the Church, always hostile to innovation, and fearful of a departure from conservatism in favour of *motifs* imported from the old timber construction of the north, attempted to standardise the traditional Byzantine plan, thereby cutting Russia more completely adrift from the

cultural influences [of the West than she had been by the early decision to follow the Orthodox and not the Latin Church. So the story of the Russian Style is rather a crabbed one. It is an elaboration rather than an evolution, and as such has suffered neglect from academicians until very recently. But like many things colloquial, it has a rare and exotic beauty of its own. Because this is the first book in the language on the subject, and because it is excellently written and illustrated, it must be called an important addition to standard works on the history of architecture.

I WAS A GERMAN. By Ernst Toller. Translated by Edward Crankshaw. 5s. (Bodley Head.)

Herr Toller's book is something more than an autobiographical account of the political situation in Germany immediately after the War—it is an impassioned cry of the utmost sincerity and a very fine and moving piece of writing. Coming amid a welter of books of varying merit on the problem of modern Germany, this book, more than any other I have read, helps one to understand the psychological causes underlying the phenomena of German Fascism. Toller's descriptions of the White Terror in Munich bear a more than superficial resemblance to the tales of Nazi atrocities in our daily press. That Ernst Toller, persecuted for his beliefs by his countrymen all his

life, should be enormously prejudiced against such a form of government as Hitler's is only too grimly obvious, but the sensibility and the humanity evident in all his writings could not allow any conscious distortion of facts.

From these pages emerge the figure of a poet and a study in suffering. "The Swallow Book" is practically the only verse that Toller has written, but his nature is a poet's with all its vulnerability. The opening chapter contains his memories of his childhood; they are not happy memories. Somehow, in spite of the difference in style, they remind one of certain parts of Rilke's "Notebooks." Circumstances caused him to realise early the cruel stupidities of class distinction. At the outbreak of war he was studying in France; the cataclysm swept him off his feet in the wave of emotional patriotism that caught so many other young poets. The horrors he had to witness at the Front, described here with austere restraint, soon destroyed all illusions, of course. Fortunately he was discharged early as unfit for further service. There followed a period of intense thought and a great impulse to active protest against the futility that was ruining Europe. Toller and a number of other young non-participants became "criminal pacifists." It was he who wrote the pamphlets urging the workers of Munich to strike, and for this he was arrested. Persecution had begun. He was imprisoned, sent back to the army, confined without justification in a lunatic asylum and again sent back to the army. At the end of 1918, soon after his final discharge, the German Revolution began—one of the most futile revolutions in history. Toller was in Bavaria, where a Free State was immediately proclaimed, and he was elected deputy president of the Central Committee of Workers' Councils. For a short time it was the day of idealists like Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg and Kurt Eisner—a stormy time for Germany. The conflicts raging so undisguisedly then are far from having been resolved.

Ernst Toller, whom most of us only think of to-day as the author of the strongest of modern German plays, was at that time the commander of the Red Army of the Bavarian Soviet at Munich, and thus one of the central figures of the fateful May 1st. When the reactionaries came into power a reward of 10,000 marks was offered for his arrest. Many, many times he escaped a brutal death, and at last, after a farcical trial, was sentenced to five years' imprisonment in the fortress at Niederschönenfeld.

It seems incredible that a man of Toller's greatness and sensitivity should have been made to suffer the torments of mind and body that are described in "I Was a German." It is in every way a terrible book and one to make you think and think again. "Beneath the yoke of barbarism one must not keep silence; one must fight. Whoever is silent at such a time is a traitor to humanity," writes the author in his introduction. And these words are dated: "*The day my books were burnt in Germany.*"

David Gascoyne

THE REALITY OF MUSIC. By Rutland Boughton. 7s. 6d. (Kegan Paul.)

Mr. Rutland Boughton, the author of "The Reality of Music," has some illuminating, not to say clear theories, which in this treatise he advances with entertaining aplomb. "All arts except music have a relation to the real world. Architecture has a structural basis. Sculpture and painting derive from physical phenomena. . . . But the relation of music to real life is less obvious and little understood." From this (a sentence quoted from the blurb) Mr. Boughton proceeds to trace the connections between "real life," as he terms it, and music, from primitive origins, through folk-music, to the development of music during the Christian era. Mr. Boughton deals quite expertly with historical music, but not quite so expertly with his contemporaries.

Historically though "The Reality of Music" represents thoroughly industrious scholarship, coupled with a profound sincerity, Mr. Boughton's inquiry into the significance and domestic meanings of folk-songs is in particular worthy of close reading. His book is the

fruit of an exclusively studious mind, thoroughly imbued with its subject.

MODERN RUSSIA. By Cicely Hamilton. 7s. 6d. net. (Dent.)

The Russian experiment in mass socialism has had no rival, as a subject for myopic hysteria, since the late World-war. With eyes glued to the view at the moment in front of them, observers from other nations have usually returned to praise or blame, both immoderately. Miss Hamilton throughout observes the present in the light of the far-stretching past, and this preserves her sense of proportion. Quietly, with a gentle and good-natured irony, she makes comparisons. Is all this *really* so new, so epoch-making in its novelty? Or is it only another of the radical operations that have been performed on the immense, sprawling, physically powerful but slave-minded body of the Russian people? Lenin after all has much in common with Peter the Great, who also "dragged the nation by main force along the road to progress" as he saw it. Again, watching a gang of Soviet convicts in Sebastopol, she remembers the slave trains of the thirteenth century Tartar conquerors.

"However we may try to break with the past, we are always the children of our fathers." That is how she sees the modern Bolsheviks—as children, engaging in their young enthusiasm, bolstering their courage with self-praise, expecting the effete capitalist visitor to exclaim with envious surprise at their clinics, their workmen's flats and educational facilities, just as if nothing of the sort had ever been dreamt of before.

Not that Miss Hamilton denies all progress to the present regime, as witness the chapter on "Birth Control." Even of the much advertised anti-religion campaign, she allows that godlessness may well seem a necessary concomitant to the doctrine of universal equality. "God is not our equal; towards Him the attitude of 'I'm as good as you' is impossible." It is the huge capacity of the Russian for passionate faith which has made him accept communism as the new god. How far will this form of idol worship carry him? The impression left on the reader of this wise, often humorous, always stimulating book is that the new tradition must ultimately borrow from the old, if it is to stand the test of time.

Sylvia Stevenson



An Anti-God Museum

(The Cathedral of St. Isaac, Leningrad)

From "Modern Russia," by Cicely Hamilton (Dent)

SOME BOOKS
TO FEBR

Art

Painting a Portrait. By De László. 10s. 6d. (*Studio*.)

Biography and Autobiography

Niger: The Life of Mungo Park. By Lewis Grassie Gibbon. 12s. 6d. (Faber & Faber.)

Mad Mike. Edited by George Goodchild. 8s. 6d. (Chapman & Hall.)

The Frolic and the Gentle: A Study of Charles Lamb. A. C. Ward. 6s. (Methuen.)

Art, Paint and Vanity. A. L. L. Matthiesson. 10s. 6d. (Heath Cranton.)

Watching the World Go By. Willis J. Abbot. 12s. 6d. (Bodley Head.)

Byron. Peter Quennell. 2s. (Duckworth.)

At the Shrine of St. Charles. E. V. Lucas. (Stray papers on Lamb now collected for the Centenary of his Death in 1834.) 5s. (Methuen.)

Twelve Jews (Bearsted, Disraeli, Ehrlich, Epstein, Freud, Luzzati, Ludwig Mond, Proust, Rathenau, Reinhardt, Trotsky, Weizmann). Ed. Hector Bolitho. 15s. (Rich & Cowan.)

The Life of Emerson. Van Wyck Brooks. 10s. 6d. (Dent.)

Drama

Realism in the Drama. Hugh Sykes Davies. 4s. 6d. (Cambridge University Press.)

The Best One-Act Plays of 1933. Selected by J. W. Marriott. 5s. (Harrap.)

The Technique of Play Production. A. K. Boyd. 5s. (Harrap.)

Weak End: A Play in Three Acts. Michael Hill. 5s. (Cranley & Day.)

Fiction

Doctor Jaz. Margaret Vivian. 6s. (Stockwell.)

The Brass Knocker. Edward Rathbone. 7s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)

The Zadda Street Affair. Wallace Jackson. 7s. 6d. (Sampson Low.)

Periwake. Leslie A. Paul. 7s. 6d. (Denis Archer.)

The Convenient Marriage. Georgette Heyer. 7s. 6d. (Heinemann)

A Merry Eternity. Noel Macdonald Wilby. 7s. 6d. (Washbourne & Bogan.)

Maze. Margaret Dale. 7s. 6d. (Constable.)

The Queensgate Mystery. Grace Pettman. 1s. 6d. (Pickering & Inglis.)

The Night Life of the Gods. Thorne Smith. 7s. 6d. (Barker.)

The House of Dreams. Katharine Tynan. 7s. 6d. (Ward, Lock.)

Uneasily to Bed. Delano Ames. 7s. 6d. (Grayson.)

Vagabonds' Road. Halliwell Sutcliffe. 7s. 6d. (John Long.)

Wandesforde Brothers. R. K. Weekes. 7s. 6d. (John Long.)

Valley of Eden. T. Dick. 7s. 6d. (John Long.)

Below the Surface. E. Keble Chatterton. 7s. 6d. (Hurst & Blackett.)

Dead Heat. Stanley S. Wright. 7s. 6d. (Skeffington.)

Hungarian Rhapsody. Sheila Fitzgerald. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

Murder in the Sanctuary. "Leo Grex." 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

Argonaut. Honoré Morrow. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

Thou My Beloved. Elisabeth S. Payne. 7s. 6d. (Stanley Paul.)

Everard Bringle. John Owen. 7s. 6d. (Gollancz.)

Fire Brigade. Raymond Otis. 7s. 6d. (Gollancz.)

Twisted Clay. Frank Watford. 7s. 6d. (Werner Laurie.)

Good-bye Hell! Eve Ellin. 3s. 6d. (Werner Laurie.)

The Cautley Conundrum. A. Fielding. 7s. 6d. (Crime Club.)

The Windmill Mystery. J. Jefferson Farjeon. 7s. 6d. (Crime Club.)

Blind Alley. T. Thompson. 7s. 6d. (Allen & Unwin.)

The Tide. Vincent Sheean. 7s. 6d. (Methuen.)

Lindy Lou. Sophia Cleugh. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Steele Bey's Revenge. T. Lund. 7s. 6d. (Werner Laurie.)

Week-end at Thrackley. Alan Melville. 7s. 6d. (Skeffington.)

Riders of the Badlands. Russell A. Bankson. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

Wire Blinds. Jennifer True. 7s. 6d. (John Long.)

The Gardenia. Robert Hichens. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

Cocktails at Six. C. Gordon Glover. 7s. 6d. (Geoffrey Bles.)

Death by Misadventure. Barbara Malim. 7s. 6d. (Murray.)

The Glengarry Girl. Ralph Connor. 7s. 6d. (Bodley Head.)

Priest Or Pagan. John Rathbone Oliver. 7s. 6d. (Cassell.)

Twin Bedsteads. Noël Godber. 7s. 6d. (John Long.)

Hilltops Clear. Emilie Loring. 7s. 6d. (Stanley Paul.)

In a Province. Laurens van der Post. 7s. 6d. (Hogarth Press.)

Nightshade: The Story of a Black-mailer. Gertrude M. Allen. 7s. 6d. (Rich & Cowan.)

Winner Take Nothing. Ernest Hemingway. 7s. 6d. (Jonathan Cape.)

The Wild Macraes. James Barke. 7s. 6d. (Collins.)

Render Unto Cæsar. Margot Robert Adamson. 7s. 6d. (Dent.)

Picture People. Olga Rosmanith. 7s. 6d. (John Long.)

The Black Templar. John Halstead. 7s. 6d. (Stanley Paul.)

Murder at Bayside. Raymond Robins. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

No Man's Woman. Aubrey Boyd. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

Design. Kathleen Erskine. 7s. 6d. (Hutchinson.)

As Good as a Mile. Edward Albert. 7s. 6d. (Nicholson & Watson.)

FROM THE NEW BOOKS

"Collapse, as often as not, is the result of persisting in an old attitude towards some important relationship, which in the course of time has changed its nature."—"Reflections on the Death of a Porcupine," by D. H. Lawrence. (Martin Secker.)

"Ceylon, tiny and inconspicuous though it is, is the present *locus* of an original philanthropical experiment, and it can consequently, *pro tem.*, be regarded as the political barometer of the East."—"Brother Ceylon," by James Thorburn Muirhead, F.R.G.S. (Lincoln Williams.)

"To get the best from a film is real hard work. You can see a piece of film thirty or forty times and then suddenly discover something that you have not noticed before. There are things in a film that you will see but not be conscious of until someone else calls your attention to them."—"For Filmgoers Only." (Faber & Faber.)

"Why do the plain people of Britain read my books? I have an idea it is for the same reason that we Americans loved Charles Dickens, and did not cease to read him even when he came here and infuriated us by describing our bad manners, our habits of talking through our noses, and of spitting tobacco juice all over the landscape."—"An Upton Sinclair Anthology." (Werner Laurie.)

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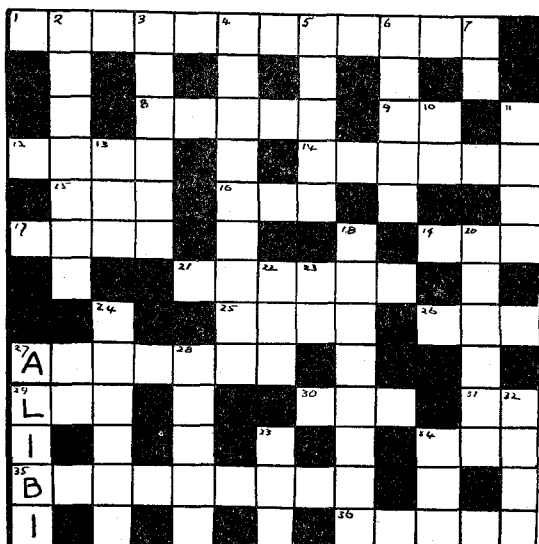
"THE BOOKMAN" CROSSWORD No. 41

WILLIAM MORRIS

BY "PROCRUSTES"

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Crossword No. 41



CLUES ACROSS :

1. Translated from the Icelandic.
8. Morris wrote his own and printed Chaucer's.
9. Preposition.
12. "In sleep a little while ago
O'er a . . . -litten world of snow
I fared."—(*The Fostering of Aslaug*.)
14. Strictly speaking, most of Morris's heroes are this.
15. Hasten from the Anglo-Saxon.
16. "But the Queen
Rose from her bed, and, like a . . . unseen,
Stole from the house."—(*Bellerophon at Argos*.)
17. "Far out in the meadows, above the young corn,
The heavy . . . wait, and restless and cold
The uneasy wind rises."—(*Summer Dawn*.)
19. "There was a lady lived in a hall,
Large in the eyes, and slim and tall;
And ever she sang from morn to noon
' . . . red roses across the moon.'"
21. Villain of "The Haystack in the Floods."
25. Morris often used gin for it.
26. "Ruskin has made . . . possible for us," said Morris.
27. Morris perceived little more than this in Coleridge, with a good deal of "inanity."
29. Poetic diction made this almost invariably a limb for Morris.
30. See 20 across.
31. Verb.
34. Morris inherited a sufficiency of it.
35. Character in "The Water of the Wondrous Isles."
36. Heimir was this with what Grima called "an ugly box of minstrelsy."—(*The Fostering of Aslaug*.)

CLUES DOWN :

2. Morris's "Paradise."
3. Morris's English hexameter is one of the more difficult of these to handle.
4. Renowned *imprimatur*.
5. "The chap could write a play—but it wouldn't be literature."—(MORRIS.)
6. "By the prey of the . . . in the thicket and the holy
Beast of (33 down)
I hallow me to (32 down) for a leader of his host."
—(Bridal pledge of 24 down.)
7. " ' Hauskuld, my youngest son,
Said Olaf, ' kneels there, but the standing one
Is . . . the Black, my house-carle, a stout man.'"
—(*The Lovers of Gudrun*.)
10. Preposition.
11. "So when his last word's . . . died away,
The growing wind at end of that wild day
Alone they heard."—(*Atalanta's Race*.)
13. That of Phineus was faulty, and Perseus survived.
—(*The Doom of King Acrisius*.)
18. "Is there any who will dare
To climb up the yellow stair,
Glorious . . . 's golden hair?"
20. With 30 across—where the Well was.
22. "From the board's end there rose up one,
A little . . . old monk, right wise
Of semblance, with small glittering eyes."
—(*The Land East of the Sun and West of the Moon*.)
23. Degree.
24. The Volsung dragon-slayer.
28. It was the other Homeric epic that Morris translated.
32. The god of the two ravens.
33. See 6 down.
34. "The wisest man, who long that land has . . .
Breaks the deep silence, unto whom again
A wanderer answers."—(*The Wanderers*.)

PRIZE COMPETITIONS FOR MARCH

Answers to these Competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing name and address of sender) must be received by the Editor not later than MARCH 19TH. A competitor may enter for all the Competitions, but must cut out the coupon and send this with each answer or group of answers and address envelope :

"The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.4.

Competitors must please keep copies of their MSS., as the Editor cannot undertake to return them.

THE PRIZES OFFERED THIS MONTH ARE :

- I.—Throughout 1934 a monthly prize of TWO GUINEAS will be offered for the best comment, in not more than two hundred words, on any topic of interest during the current month. Preference will be given to entries dealing with political, social or literary questions of a controversial nature. Overseas competitors are asked particularly to note that, for this competition, their entries will be eligible irrespective of the closing date. The editor reserves the right to print any comments submitted.

In addition there will be prizes of :

- II.—ONE GUINEA for the best definition of art.
- III.—HALF A GUINEA for a satire (in not more than ten heroic couplets) in the manner of Dryden, on any Member of the present Parliament.
- IV.—THREE NEW BOOKS for the best quotation applicable to any book mentioned in this number of THE BOOKMAN.

- V.—THE BOOKMAN will be sent post free for twelve months to the sender of the best suggestion for a competition.

Results of February Competitions

- I.—TWO GUINEAS for the best comment is awarded to W. Hugh C. Moreton, 7, Heathville Road, Crouch Hill, London, N.19.

We also highly commend the entries of Mrs. May Belben (Wimborne), M. T. Coghlan (Dublin), Richard H. Cowan (Ipswich), A. H. Godwin (Hornsey), Edith Thomas (Bath), "Onlooker" (London, E.1), Mannington Sayers (Monmouth), Leigh Waller (Brooklands), E. I. Walton (Southampton), Bernard Denvir (Liverpool).

- II.—ONE GUINEA for the best definition of "A Celebrity" is awarded to Gertrude Hancox, 7, Lime Grove, New Malden, Surrey, who quotes almost verbatim from a schoolboy's essay at a recent examination :

"A Celebrity is a Musician if he has long hair and plays something. If he wears a chain round his neck and has a big front, he is a Mayor Celebrity. He is often called 'Sir' to show he has been knighted and is very rich. But a Celebrity need not be anybody. Anybody can be one : a Soldier, a Sailor or even an M.P.

"Last Term we had a Celebrity at School. He said he was going to give us a yarn, but it was poor stuff. A Celebrity may be a lady. The best ones are Film-stars, especially the pretty ones. They look best as 'Close-ups,' and have big eyes and teeth. Actresses too are great